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EXPOSITORY VALUE  
THE REVISED VERSION

PROF. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

The Short Course Series.

Sir.—One point deserves to be emphasised, and it is this, Sir,—The real fallacy is in supposing that when you have shown that a few of the 30,000 (not 3,000) alterations by the Revisers are doubtful or not of incalculable weight, you have disproved the claim of R.V. to be infinitely more accurate than A.V. The real test is to take the versions as actually existing and mark in each where alterations are required by faithfulness under the five classes enumerated by the Revisers in their preface. The verdict will then be overwhelmingly on the side of R.V. so far as accuracy, the only thing Mr. Stimpson is discussing, is concerned.

HENRY LAURENCE.

39 Kidbrook Park Road, Blackheath.

text.

KENEY.

Sir,—May I recommend those who are in doubt as to the merits of the Revised Version to read Professor Milligan's *Expository Value of the Revised Version*, published by Messrs. T. & T. Clark in the Short Course Series? The author is quite as well qualified to offer an opinion as the late Dean Burgon.

S. R. CAMBIE.

Camerton Rectory, Bath.

Sir,—The general recognition of a *textus receptus*, with which all may be brought up in verbal familiarity, is surely an incomparable advantage. That the Authorised Version is an adequately accurate rendering of the spirit and the letter of the original manuscripts for essential purposes may be claimed upon the basis of experience. For evangelistic publication it is "quick and powerful," while its phraseology is classical and embedded in the literature of the English-speaking world. That the rendering of the original is at times erroneous may be undeniable. That the Revised Version, with all its shortcomings, is in many passages an obvious correction may be equally admitted. That any version can claim to be finally adequate as a rendering of a text in itself frequently uncertain in detail is impossible. For purposes of exegesis every authoritative emendation is to be taken into account, and the Authorised Version to be subjected to resultant modification.

My point is that a Scriptural education based upon a verbal familiarity with an "established" rendering is a foundation of rock; while a mere general acquaintance with a variety of translations, however necessary to the student, is a shifting base for the erection of a Scriptural structure in the minds of the general public, and more particularly of the young.

G. F. J.

Sir,—Mr. Bomford's letter in your last issue, and his criticism of the strange logic shown in Dr. Hort's somewhat capricious treatment of the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS., reminds me of a passage in the late Lord Hatherley's well-known book, *The Continuity of Scripture* (Preface, p. xxxi). Referring to the Higher Criticism, he says :

I purposely avoid in this publication all critical inquiry. At some future time it may be permitted me to examine the supposed evidence on which are based some



## THE REVISED VERSION IN CHURCH.

Sir,—It is indeed rare to find in the *Record* an utterance of such a retrograde character as that of last week's Editorial Note regarding the Revised Version. It must be due to some Homeric nodding on the Editor's part! In the public reading of the Word of God can we possibly be justified in preferring sentiment to sense, or rhythm to truth? The R.V. may not be—probably no translation could be—"invariably accurate," but it is infinitely more accurate than the A.V., and that is what really matters. However desirable stateliness of diction or smoothness of rhythm may be, it should never be forgotten that both Versions are translations only, and it is therefore by their accuracy in this respect that they surely must be judged. The actual form of the original text from which the translation is made will always be a matter of dispute in some of its details; but when it is borne in mind that the three great manuscripts—the Vatican, the Sinaitic, and the Alexandrian—were none of them available in 1611, it is obvious that the translators of the Revised Version had enormous advantages in ascertaining the correct text.

As to translation, let any unprejudiced reader compare with the clear renderings of the Revised Version

the meaninglessness of the A.V. in such passages as Job xi. 6; Col. ii. 23; and Ps. cxli. 5; or the doctrinal error of 2 Tim. ii. 26 and Rev. xxii. 14; or the impossible translations of Is. ix. 3; or Acts xxvi. 28; or 1 Cor. iv. 4. It has been truly said that in the A.V. much of the Book of Job is absolutely unintelligible; what person, hearing Job xxviii. read in the A.V., can be made to understand that it is the miner's work, and not God's, which is being described? There can be no question, in these and many other passages, as to which version will best convey the truth of God's Word to the listening congregation. In 1898 the then Bishop of Exeter stated in Convocation that in his judgment 3,000 of the emendations of the R.V. were of almost incalculable worth; are we right in "dispensing" to our people 3,000 errors in their place? I would urge anyone who at present agrees with the writer in *The Times* to obtain from the S.P.C.K. Bishop Thornton's masterly pamphlet, "The Revised Version of the Bible: Our Duty in Regard to It"; it appears to me as unanswerable as it is invaluable.

I should imagine that few clergy would in any case "foist" the R.V. on their people without previous explanation and consultation; but if the merits of the case were fairly and fully stated, it seems inconceivable that any congregation would be foolish enough to prefer the less accurate A.V. to the more accurate R.V. merely for sentimental reasons.

1922 W. J. L. SHEPPARD.

Holy Trinity Vicarage, Ripon.

latest editor, Von Soden, though constructed on a different theory from that of Westcott-Hort, is very largely in agreement with it, as can be seen from Dr. Moffatt's translation made from Von Soden's text.

Highbury.

1922 HAROLD SMITH.

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## THE REVISED VERSION IN CHURCH.

Sir,—I, for one, would like to congratulate you warmly on your editorial regarding the Revised Version, even at the cost of being considered retrograde, and I would go even further, and say that it is a matter of surprise to me that so many people of education can speak of the Revised Version in terms of such strong approval as Mr. Sheppard does. One's lack of rapturous acceptance of it and the exclusion of the A.V. is not due to sentiment, and I join issue with him when he says that the R.V. is infinitely more accurate as a translation, and when he speaks as if all the "sense" and "truth" were on its side.

Speaking mainly of the New Testament, as a matter of fact the R.V. as a translation is nearly as inconsistent as the A.V. : the revisers have slavishly adhered to the literal translation by the same English word of some Greek word, in ninety-nine cases to the spoiling of the English idiom (in which cases they have given us a "translation" but not a "version"), and yet, in the hundredth case we shall find a different English word (in which case we have a "version" but not a "translation").

So to put the R.V. into the hands, or ears, of people who cannot judge of its claims for themselves, as an "infinitely more accurate" translation is, to say the least of it, unkind.

If Mr. Sheppard will read Dean Burgon's *Revision Revised*, perhaps he will begin to wonder whether the 3,000 emendations of the revisers are of such "incalculable worth" after all. "Speak thou the things which benefit the sound doctrine," St. Jas. i. 15. "We look for a Saviour," Phil. iii. 20 (there is only one). "He it is that shall save His people," St. Matt. i. 21 (which is certainly not a translation of *αὐτός*). "Yea, Lord, I have believed," St. John ii. 27 : here are four of the 3,000 : are they of such "incalculable worth"? Why, one of them is not a true translation, and another is such a bald translation that it misses entirely the sense of the Greek idiom. And these four might be multiplied indefinitely. Look at Jas. i. 11. The R.V. runs : "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat but it withereth away." One doesn't advance very far in the Greek language before learning that *καί* means "and," so the R.V. fails to be a version here and becomes a translation, by giving us, "For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind and withereth the grass." But, alas, for consistency! For the Greek verbs here are both in the aorist, and a translation should have indicated that. No honest person, comparing the R.V. with the A.V. here, would say that the emendation is "of incalculable worth." The R.V. is, here, neither a faithful translation nor a faithful version, and the A.V. could only be improved in modern idiom by substituting "than" for "but." Again, we early learnt that *διὰ* with the genitive means "through" (of motion), so in Acts ix. 25, instead of "The disciples . . . let him down by the wall," we have in the R.V. "let him down through the wall," as if the city wall were of so flimsy a character that it might be dug through, without sufficient noise to attract attention!

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The Short Course Series

EDITED BY  
REV. JOHN ADAMS, B.D.

THE  
EXPOSITORY VALUE OF  
THE REVISED VERSION

BY

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TO  
JAMES HOPE MOULTON

45202856 ✓

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"TRANSLATION it is that openeth the window, to let  
in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat  
the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we  
may look into the most holy place; that removeth  
the cover of the well, that we may come by the  
water."

*The Translators to the Reader, 1611.*



## PART I

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE ENG-  
LISH VERSIONS FROM THE EARLIEST  
DAYS DOWN TO THE REVISED VERSION





# I

## THE EARLIER VERSIONS

IN order to understand the place which the Revised Version has in the history of our English Bible, it will be well to review that history briefly from the time of the original documents down to the present day.

### I. THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS AND JEROME.

In the case of the Old Testament, these original documents consisted of a number of rolls, or books in roll-form, the time of whose composition extended over a period of several centuries. The rolls were written (with a few trifling exceptions) in the Hebrew language, and mainly, if not entirely, on skins. And it is characteristic of the

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conservatism that generally prevails in religious matters, that to this day the Jews still prefer the use of leather and the roll-form for Synagogue use. And though, as a matter of fact, the oldest dated Hebrew MS. we possess belongs to the close of the tenth century after Christ, there are many proofs known to scholars which show that the original text has on the whole been faithfully preserved.

Nor must we forget that it is not only in the original Hebrew that the books of the Old Covenant have been handed down to us. About two hundred years before Christ, the whole Old Testament was translated into Greek. And while this translation was intended primarily for the Jews of the Dispersion, it came to be largely used in Palestine itself by those to whom the original Hebrew was gradually becoming more and more unfamiliar, owing to Aramaic having taken its place in general use. The SEPTUAGINT indeed, as this Greek translation was called, may be said to have formed the Bible of our Lord and His Apostles, if we



## The Earlier Versions

may judge from the fact that the majority of quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament approximate more closely to the Greek than to the Hebrew version.

As regards the NEW TESTAMENT, its books, in the form in which we have them now, were all written in the ordinary vernacular Greek of the day, and, it can hardly be doubted, on papyrus, then the common writing material. Nor, at first, did any such authority or sanctity attach to them as was the case with the books of the Law and of the Prophets. Gradually, however, they won their way to canonical acceptance, until about the close of the second century the Christian Church virtually possessed what is now our Bible, with its two parts, the Old and the New Testaments, both of which are preserved for us in the great codices of the fourth century—the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus.

By the aid of these Greek MSS., and many others of varying degrees of value, critics are now engaged in the all-important work

## Value of the Revised Version

of reconstructing, as far as possible, the actual words of the sacred writers.

In this task a welcome aid is afforded by the different versions or translations into which from a very early date the books of the Bible were rendered. And amongst these there is one which has a very direct bearing on our present inquiry.

From the second century onwards parts of the Bible had appeared in a Latin dress ; but, gradually, so many various readings and renderings had sprung up, that, towards the close of the fourth century, the need of an authoritative revision became apparent. This task was accordingly entrusted by Pope Damasus to Eusebius Hieronymus, or Jerome, as he is generally called. And the result of his labours was the VULGATE, or commonly-received Latin Text, which in the Sixtine-Clementine recension of 1592 is still the authoritative Scripture of the Roman Catholic Church.

It was this Latin Bible, then, that St. Augustine and his fellow-missionaries



## The Earlier Versions

brought with them to England in the sixth century, and consequently it formed the basis of those Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman paraphrases which for nearly seven hundred years formed the only vernacular versions of Scripture which the people in this country possessed.

### 2. THE EARLY PARAPHRASIS AND WYCLIF.

The story of the early paraphrases is a very interesting one, embracing as it does the names of the Saxon cowherd CÆDMON, who, in the third quarter of the seventh century, in obedience to a Divine vision, sang "the beginning of created things"; of the venerable BEDE, the most famous scholar of his day in Western Europe, whose last work was a translation of the Gospel of St. John; and of the priest ALDRED, who, about the middle of the tenth century, wrote an Anglo-Saxon word-for-word translation between the lines of the Latin Gospels written at Lindisfarne in honour of St. Cuthbert.

## Value of the Revised Version

But important as the work of these and others was, it cannot be said to have done more than familiarize the minds of the people with the leading facts in Old and New Testament history, until such time as they should have the whole Bible in their own hands.

The man to whom this was principally due was JOHN WYCLIF, "the morning star of the Reformation." Struck by the evils and distresses of his times, Wyclif felt that what, above all, the people required was a wider acquaintance with the truths of the Gospel. "Christian men," so he wrote, "ought much to travail night and day about text of Holy Writ, and namely [especially] the Gospel in their mother-tongue, since Jesus Christ, very God and very man, taught this Gospel with His own blessed mouth and kept it in His life." Accordingly, with the assistance of his friend Nicholas de Hereford, he set to work so earnestly at the task of translation that by the middle of the year 1382 he had the joy of seeing the whole Scriptures in the hands



## The Earlier Versions

of the people in a form they could understand. Six years later a revised edition appeared under the editorship of Wyclif's former assistant, John Purvey, introduced by a most interesting Prologue. "Since at the beginning of faith," so Purvey writes, "so many men translated into Latin, and to great profit of Latin men, let one simple creature of God translate into English, for profit of English men. . . . Therefore a translator hath great need to study well the sentence, both before and after, and look that such equivalent words accord with the sentence, and he hath need to live a clean life, and be full devout in prayers, and have not his wit occupied about worldly things, that the Holy Spirit, author of wisdom, and knowledge, and truth, direct him in his work, and suffer him not to err. . . . By this manner with good living and great travail, men may come to true and clear translating, and true understanding of Holy Writ, seem it never so hard at the beginning."

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We might have expected that the publication of these versions would have pleased the Church, but instead it aroused the bitter hostility of the priests and others in authority, and for their reward the translators had to look to the eagerness with which their work was welcomed by all classes of the people.

The new versions were indeed admirably suited for popular use by the homeliness and direction of their diction, as may be seen in the following examples from Purvey's revision of St. Matthew: "Twey men metten hym, that hadden deuelis, and camen out of graues, ful woode [mad]" (viii. 28); "And loo! in a greet bire [rush] al the droue wente heedlyng in to the see" (viii. 32); "A leche is not nedeful to men that faren wel, but to men that ben yuel at ese" (ix. 12); "Lo! my child, whom Y haue chosun, my derling" (xii. 18); "And he cometh, and fyndith it voide, and clensid with besyms [brooms], and maad faire" (xii. 44); "And the boot in the myddel of the see was schoggid with wawis"

## The Earlier Versions

(xiv. 24). From the earlier version, it will be of interest to cite Wyclif's rendering of the Lord's Prayer :

“ Oure fader that art in heuenes, halowide be thi name ; thi kyngdom come to ; be thi wille done as in heuene and in erthe ; zif to vs this day oure brede ouer other substaunce ; and forzyue to vs oure dettis, as we forzyuen to oure dottours ; and leede vs not in to temptacōn, but delyuer vs fro al euyl. Amen ” (Matt. vi. 9-13).

It will be noted that Wyclif rightly omits the doxology at the end in accordance with the Latin text from which he was translating, which in this particular is closer to the original, as our Revised Version shows, than many of the late Greek MSS. which subsequent translators used. On the other hand, both his and Purvey's versions undoubtedly suffered greatly from being only translations of a translation ; while the fact that they were prepared entirely by hand necessarily made copies very expensive, as much as £30 or £40 of our money being sometimes paid for a complete copy.



# Value of the Revised Version

## 3. THE INVENTION OF PRINTING AND TINDALE.

The publication in the first half of the fourteenth century of the *BIBLIA PAUPERUM*, a series of rough woodcuts with texts from Scripture attached, did something, no doubt, in the way of spreading a knowledge of Bible History amongst the people. But the instruction these books conveyed was small, and it is to two other events that we must principally look for the preparation by which the appearance of our next version was heralded.

One was the Invention of Printing. About the middle of the fifteenth century, Fust, a goldsmith of Mainz, perfecting Gutenberg's experiments, issued from the Press the first printed Latin Bible, generally known as the Mazarin Bible, from a copy found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin. The new discovery soon spread, and of the Latin Bible alone ninety-one editions were issued before the close of the century.

## The Earlier Versions

The other was the Revival of Learning. By the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Greek scholars were driven westward, and a fresh era began in the study of Greek. The result was the appearance of Erasmus' Greek Testament at Basle in 1516, which in matter of publication, though not of actual printing, antedated by several years the New Testament in the Complutensian Polyglot edition of Cardinal Ximenes. New editions of the Hebrew Old Testament, along with Hebrew and Greek Grammars, also began to appear, offering invaluable aids for the work of translation. And with the hour came the man.

It is impossible to sketch even in outline the romantic story of WILLIAM TINDALE (1490-1536). It must be enough that from the hour when in controversy with a Roman Catholic opponent he exclaimed, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou doest," until the day—6th October 1536—when he died a martyr at the stake at

## Value of the Revised Version

Vilvorde near Brussels, his whole energies were directed to his self-imposed task. It was in exile that that task was performed, for, as he pathetically remarks, "there was no place to do it in all England." Voluntarily, therefore, he left his native land, never to see it again; and after passing through various vicissitudes and dangers, at length at Worms, in the year 1525, produced the first complete printed New Testament in English. Copies, both in the original quarto and in a smaller octavo edition, were at once forwarded to England; but warning of their coming had already been sent, and thousands of copies were seized and burnt at the old Cross of St. Paul's.<sup>1</sup> It was only what Tindale had expected. "In burning the New Testament," he wrote, two years later, "they did none

<sup>1</sup> Only three copies now survive: one a fragment of the quarto edition, containing the Prologue and St. Matt. i. 1-xxii. 12 in the Grenville Room of the British Museum, and two copies of the octavo edition, one, wanting only the title-page, in the Library of the Baptist College at Bristol, and the other, more defective, in the Library of St. Paul's Cathedral, London.



## The Earlier Versions

other thing than that I looked for: no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will that it shall so be." Thanks, however, to the printing-press, the place of the burnt copies was soon supplied, and the new version was scattered broadcast over the land. Thus in 1528 one Robert Necton confessed to carrying on a regular work of colportage, selling the New Testaments at 2s. or 2s. 6d. bound, or, according to the present value of the money, £1, 10s. or £1, 17s. 6d. each. And there is further evidence that "divers merchants of Scotland bought many of such books, and took them to Scotland, a part to Edinburgh, and most part to the town of St. Andrews."

Meanwhile the translator was continuing his work abroad, and in 1530 there appeared a translation of the Pentateuch with characteristic Prologues to the several books,<sup>1</sup> and four years later a revised edition of the New Testament was published at Antwerp

<sup>1</sup> Thus the opening Prologue begins: "Though a man had a precious iuell and a rich, yet if he wiste not the value thereof nor wherfore it served, he were nother

## Value of the Revised Version

with the title, "The Newe Testament dylygently corrected and compared with the Greek by Willyam Tindale." To this edition certain Old Testament lessons were attached and a Preface in which the translator called upon all men to read his translation "for that purpose I wrote it, even to bring them to the knowledge of the Scripture," adding, with characteristic humility, a request to all who found any fault in his work to show it to him that he might amend it. The result was that in the following year there appeared a fresh issue of the 1534 Testament, "yet once agayne corrected by Willyam Tindale," the very minuteness of many of the changes affording striking witness of the translator's desire for the most scrupulous accuracy. It was all in keeping with the inmost spirit of his whole work, as he himself had declared that spirit in writing to his friend Fryth

the better nor rycher of a straw. Even so though we read the scripture and bable of it never so moch, yet if we know not the use of it, and wherfore it was geven, and what is therin to be sought, it profiteth vs nothinge at all."

## The Earlier Versions

two years before : “ I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God’s word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me.”

But the heroic life was drawing to its close. Tindale had many enemies in England, and now when the Royal Envoy was instructed to decoy him to return, he would not venture. “ If it would stand,” so he pleaded in eloquent and pathetic terms, “ with the King’s most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the Scripture to be put forth among his people . . . I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same ; but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his Royal Majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death his Grace will, so that this be obtained.” The self-



## Value of the Revised Version

sacrificing plea was of no avail ; and soon afterwards he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies by an unprincipled Englishman named Philipps, and, after suffering an imprisonment of nearly a year and a half, was first strangled and then burned. His last words were, " Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

Of Tindale's worth as a man, and of his unwearied efforts in the cause of Bible translation and Bible diffusion, the little that we have been able to say is sufficient proof. On his place as a scholar it is impossible to enter. It must be enough that while his version undoubtedly bore traces of the influence of the Wyclifite versions at home and of Luther's Testament in Germany, he was too good a linguist to be slavishly dependent on any one, and can justly claim the credit of being the first in England at any rate (with the possible exception of Bede) to go straight to the Hebrew and Greek originals. While, as showing in turn the extent of his influence upon the future history of our Bible, it

## The Earlier Versions

has been calculated that in the whole of his New Testament there are not more than 350 words which do not occur in the Authorized Version, and many of the latter's most happy phrases and sentences are directly traceable to the old translator. No doubt Tindale's version had its faults, chief among them perhaps his love, for the sake of variety, of rendering the same Greek word in different ways. But take his work all in all, and Fuller's eulogy is not exaggerated : "What he undertook was to be admired as glorious ; what he performed, to be commended as profitable ; wherein he failed, is to be excused as pardonable, and to be scored on the account rather of that age, than of the author himself."

## II

### THE LATER VERSIONS

#### I. COVERDALE'S BIBLE.

TINDALE had not left himself without worthy successors, foremost amongst whom was one MILES COVERDALE (1488-1569), who had already assisted Tindale in his translation of the Pentateuch, and who now, urged on by Thomas Cromwell, set himself so diligently to work that in 1535, probably at Zurich, the first complete Bible printed in English was issued from the press.

In his Dedication to Henry VIII. Coverdale modestly disclaims the position of an independent translator, and speaks of having "purely and faythfully" followed "fyue sundry interpreters," who are generally identified with Luther, the Zurich Bible, the Vulgate, the Latin version of Pagninus,



## The Later Versions

and Tindale. At the same time he was very far from being a mere "proof-reader or corrector" of the labour of his predecessors. His work possesses undoubted original value; and if Tindale in his translation "gave us the first great outline distinctly and wonderfully etched," Coverdale "added those minuter touches which soften and harmonize it." Thus, for example, to turn to his version of the Psalms, which may still be read almost unchanged in the English Book of Common Prayer, it is to Coverdale that we owe such musical renderings as, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." "For Thy lovingkindness is better than life; my lips shall praise Thee." While, as illustrations of the man and of the time, the following quaint renderings may be given—"bare it in hir nebb" (Gen. viii. 11); "cast a pece of a mylstone upon Abimelech's heade, and brake his brane panne" (Judg. ix. 53);

## Value of the Revised Version

“ the foolish bodyes saye in their hertes :  
Tush, there is no God ” (Ps. xiv. 1) ; “ there  
is no more Triacle at Galaad ” (Jer. viii. 22).

### 2. OTHER SIXTEENTH-CENTURY VERSIONS.

Other translations now followed in rapid succession, one of which is generally known as MATTHEW'S BIBLE (1537). Its real editor, however, was a certain John Rogers, afterwards the proto-martyr in the Marian persecution, who perhaps adopted the *alias* of Thomas Matthew to hide his connexion with Tindale. For the whole of the New Testament, and about half of the Old Testament, are really Tindale's work, while the remainder is Coverdale's. Like the second edition of Coverdale's Bible, the new edition bears to be “ set forth with the Kinges most gracious lycēce,” and Cromwell, instigated by Cranmer, further obtained Henry VIII.'s permission that “ the same may be sold and read of every person, without danger of any act, proclamation, or ordinance heretofore granted to the

## The Later Versions

ordinary." Hence it came about that "by Cranmer's petition, by Cromwell's influence, and by Henry's authority, without any formal ecclesiastical decision, the book was given to the English people, which is the foundation of the text of our present Bible. From Matthew's Bible—itsself a combination of the labours of Tindale and Coverdale—all later revisions have been successively formed."<sup>1</sup>

Not yet satisfied with any of the existing versions, Cromwell called in the aid of Coverdale to prepare yet another version, which might rank as a National Bible. The work of printing was begun in Paris, but before it was completed the Inquisition stepped in, and it was with great difficulty that the precious sheets were saved and the presses sent over to England. There the work was soon finished, and in April 1539 the GREAT BIBLE, as being the Bible "in the largest volume," was issued from the press.

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *A General View of the History of the English Bible*, new edition by W. A. Wright, London, 1905, p. 71 f.

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In 1540 a new edition was called for, containing a long Preface by Archbishop Cranmer, which has led to its being called CRANMER'S BIBLE, while five other editions followed rapidly within the next eighteen months.

Every effort was made to get the people to accept the new version, Cromwell, as the king's vicegerent, issuing instructions to the clergy to provide without delay "one boke of the whole Bible of the largest volume in Englyshe," to be set up in the churches, and to "expresslye provoke, stere [stir], and exhorte every parson [person] to rede the same, as that whyche ys the verye lively worde of God." Whatever the clergy may have thought, the opportunity thus afforded was gladly taken advantage of by the people, and in the aisle of some country church it was a common sight to see an eager crowd gathered round the chained Bible, while some one more educated than the rest read aloud.

We must not, however, imagine that this open reading of the Scriptures was every-



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where viewed with favour. Thus, to confine ourselves to what took place in Scotland, on 1st March 1539, through the influence of Cardinal Beaton, five persons were burnt on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, apparently for no other crime than that they "did not hesitate to study the books both of the Old and New Testament." And at the trial of one of them, the Bishop of Dunkeld actually made it a subject of boasting—"I thank God that I never knew what the Old or New Testament was." This deplorable state of matters was not, however, long allowed to continue. In 1543 it was proposed in the Parliament meeting at Edinburgh that "all the lieges in this realm may read the Scriptures in our native tongue," and proclamation to the above effect was duly made at the Market Cross. And so eagerly was the privilege taken advantage of, that twenty-five years later John Knox in describing the effects of this Act was able to write: "This was no small victory of Christ Jesus. . . . Then might have been seen the Bible lying almost upon every

## Value of the Revised Version

gentleman's table. The New Testament was borne about in many men's hands."

The Bible to which Knox refers in these words was one in whose production he himself in all probability had a share, though for its story we must turn from Scotland to Geneva.

In the troublous times following the accession of Queen Mary, a number of the leading Reformers had taken refuge in the city of Calvin and Beza, and there, as they themselves tell us, "We thought we could bestow our labours and study in nothing which could be more acceptable to God, and comfortable to His Church, than in the translating of the Scriptures into our native tongue."

The result was that in 1560 there appeared the famous GENEVAN BIBLE, often familiarly known as the BREECHES BIBLE from its rendering of Gen. iii. 7, "They sewed fig-tree leaves together, and made themselves breeches."

The translation, as a whole, was due to the combined labours of William Whitting-

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ham, Thomas Sampson, and Anthony Gilby, and deserves high praise from the care that was bestowed upon it. Many of its renderings were very felicitous, and have passed through it into the Authorized Version, while its numerous notes, combined with the convenient size in which it appeared, did much to account for the popularity it long enjoyed.

It was not to be expected, however, that the successors of Cromwell and Cranmer would look with favour on a translation from the school of Calvin, and containing so many "prejudicial notes." Accordingly, in 1563-64, Archbishop Parker set on foot a scheme for the revision of Coverdale's version, and in 1568 the BISHOPS' BIBLE, so called from the number of bishops engaged on it, was completed, and a copy presented to Queen Elizabeth. An effort was made at the same time that it alone should be licensed "to draw to one uniformity." But this licence was never granted, and any authority which the new version enjoyed was due to episcopal, rather than to royal, support. As a trans-

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lation, indeed, the Bishops' Bible suffered from the inequality inevitable to a work which had been produced by a number of independent workers, but it is hardly fair to characterize it as "the most unsatisfactory and useless of all the old translations."<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, various portions of it are marked by a careful study of the Greek original, and not a few of the variations from previous translations, introduced by its editors, have found their way into the Authorized Version.

Before, however, we come to this version, there is still another translation to be noticed, which, like Tindale's and the Genevan, was produced in exile. At the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, certain English Roman Catholics had taken refuge on the Continent, and to three of these refugees—William Allen, Gregory Martin, and Richard Bristow—the credit of the new version principally belongs.

The first part to appear was the New Testament, "translated faithfully into Eng-

<sup>1</sup> Lovett, *The Printed English Bible*, p. 120.



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lish out of the authentical Latin, according to the best corrected copies of the same, diligently conferred with the Greeke and other editions in divers languages." This was published in Rheims in 1582, and was followed in 1609-10 by the publication at Douai of the Old Testament which had been previously completed, but had been kept back "for lack of good meanes." From its extreme adherence to "the old vulgar approved Latin," the RHEIMS AND DOUAI BIBLE is often very stilted in expression and in style, while its markedly polemical notes would in themselves have prevented its gaining anything like general acceptance.

### 3. THE AUTHORIZED VERSION.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century then, we meet with three versions of the Bible in more or less general use. There was the GREAT BIBLE of Henry VIII., still to be seen chained to the desk in many country churches ; there was the GENEVAN

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BIBLE, the favourite Bible of the people ; and there was the BISHOPS' BIBLE, supported by ecclesiastical authority. Such a state of things could not, however, continue, and the way lay open for the advent of a new version, which was gradually to supersede all its rivals, and become for three centuries the Bible of all English-speaking peoples.

Regarding this version, it is certainly strange, considering its importance, how little is known regarding its origin, which is generally traced to a chance remark of Reynolds, the Puritan leader, at the Hampton Court Conference convened by King James VI. in 1604, "that there might be a new translation of the Bible because those which were allowed in the reign of King Henry VIII. and Edward VI. were corrupt and not answerable to the truth of the original." But it is interesting to notice that, so far at least as the King was concerned, the way had been prepared three years before by certain proceedings at a meeting of the General Assembly of the

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Church of Scotland at Burntisland, at which he was present. On that occasion a similar proposal "for a new translation of the Bible, and the correcting of the Psalmes in meeter" was thrown out, and the historian Spottiswood has told us that "his majesty did urge it earnestly, and with many reasons did persuade the undertaking of the work, showing the necessity and the profit of it. . . . Speaking of the necessity, he did mention certain escapes in the common translation, . . . and when he came to speak of the Psalms, did recite whole verses of the same, showing both the faults of the metre and the discrepance from the text. It was the joy of all that were present to hear it, and bred not little admiration in the whole Assembly."<sup>1</sup> And though nothing further came of this at the time, the idea of revision was certainly suggested to James's mind, and we can understand the eagerness with which at Hampton Court he fell in with Reynolds's

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Church of Scotland*, Edinburgh edition, 1850, iii. p. 98.

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suggestion, and expressed the wish that "some especial pains should be taken in that behalf for one uniform translation; professing that he could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, but the worst of all his Majesty thought the Geneva to be." Nor was this all, but James showed an active interest in the work by proposing that the new translation should be undertaken by "the best learned in both the universities, after them to be reviewed by the bishops and the chief learned of the Church; from them to be presented to the Privy Council; and lastly to be ratified by his royal authority; and so this whole Church to be bound unto it and none other."

Notwithstanding, however, the Royal favour bestowed upon it, the actual work was not commenced until 1607, and it was 1611 before the new version was published. Its title ran :

"The Holy Bible, conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with



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the former Translations diligently compared and reuised by his Maiesties speciall Cōmandement. Appointed to be read in Churches. Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings Most Excellent Maiestie. Anno Dom. 1611."

It will be noticed that the word AUTHORIZED, by which the new version has come to be known, is not here applied to it, and, as a matter of fact, there is no evidence that it was ever publicly sanctioned by Convocation, or by Parliament, or by the King. Only slowly, and by the force of superior merit, did King James's version attain its commanding position. It became the "authorized" version, simply because it was the best.

Nor indeed was it, strictly speaking, a new translation, but rather a revision of the principal versions that had preceded it. And, consequently, through the Bibles of the Reformation period, through Tindale, through Wyclif, even through the early paraphrasts, it links itself step by step with some of the most stirring events in our

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national history, and has obtained a hold over the national mind and consciousness unparalleled in the history of any other English translation.

Of the general character of their work the Translators themselves have given a most interesting account in the striking Preface, originally attached to their work, which is understood to have been written chiefly by Dr. Miles Smith. Thus they assure us in the clearest manner that they set themselves not "to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against." And in order to secure this, they add that they were in the first instance careful to compare the renderings of the Bishops' Bible, which formed the basis of their work, with the original Hebrew and Greek—"the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, where-through the olive branches empty themselves into the gold. . . . If truth be to be tried by these tongues, then whence

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should a translation be made, but out of them ? ”

The result is that in the Authorized Version we find many literal and exact renderings introduced for the first time, while the appropriateness of the vocabulary and the beauty of the style have gained for it a hold over the national mind and consciousness unparalleled in the history of any previous version.

None, indeed, have shown themselves more ready to admit the commanding merits of the Authorized Version than those who in 1870 were appointed to revise it. “We,” so the New Testament revisers tell us in their Preface, “have had to study this great Version carefully and minutely, line by line ; and the longer we have been engaged upon it the more we have learned to admire its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression, its general accuracy, and, we must not fail to add, the music of its cadences, and the felicities of its rhythm.” And the testimony of Faber, after his secession to the

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Church of Rome, to the same effect is often quoted. Speaking of the marvellous English of the Authorized Version, he says: "It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells which the convert scarcely knows how he can forgo. Its felicities often seem to be things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. . . . The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. It is the representative of a man's best moments; all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible."

### 4. THE REVISED VERSION.

In these circumstances the very idea of revision might well seem to have been presumptuous. And yet there were not a few circumstances which, towards the close of the nineteenth century, combined to



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render such a task not only advisable but necessary, if the English reader was to be in the best possible position for having the exact sense of the original before him.

For one thing, as we shall see more fully afterwards, many of the English words used by the Translators of 1611 had become antiquated, or in the course of three centuries had so changed in meaning as no longer to be understood in the manner that was at first intended. And what is more important, earlier and better texts of the original had become available, involving many important changes of reading. Thus, to confine ourselves to the New Testament, while the Translators of 1611 had access only to a few late Greek manuscripts, at least two manuscripts of the highest importance, belonging to the fourth century, were now available. The knowledge of the versions of the Early Church had also greatly increased, and vastly improved aids in the matter of Lexicons and Grammars had placed scholars in a far more favourable position than any of their predecessors for

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removing the inaccuracies that had crept into previous translations.

In consequence, numerous changes had from time to time been silently introduced into successive issues of the Authorized Version, while various private attempts at revision had done much to prepare the minds of people for some more comprehensive scheme. It was not, however, until May 1870 that that scheme matured, when, acting on a report of a Committee appointed in the preceding February to consider the matter, the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury decided to "nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong."

For the Rules drawn up for the Revisers' guidance, and for the manner in which they carried through their work, it must be enough to refer to their own Prefaces, but pointed attention may be drawn to the importance of taking note, not only of the

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new renderings in the text, but of the marginal alternatives. The Revisers had been instructed "to make or retain no change in the Text on the second final revision by each Company, except *two thirds* of those present approve of the same," and the result was that many important emendations, that had approved themselves to what we may call the more "progressive" section of the Revisers, having failed to secure the necessary support, were relegated to the margin. The strength of the evidence for these alternative readings is, however, becoming increasingly recognized, and when accordingly the University Presses recently issued an edition of the Revised Version without these marginal notes, they did a grave wrong to one of the most valuable portions of the Revisers' work.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The most useful edition of the Revised New Testament for students is undoubtedly the edition "with Fuller References," which was published in 1910, incorporating a body of references originally prepared for the New Testament Company by two of their number, and enabling the reader, with an accuracy and completeness unknown before, to compare Scripture with Scripture.

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To return, however, to the work itself. The first part to be completed was the New Testament, which, after more than ten years of unremitting labour, was published in 1881, to be followed four years later by the Revised Old Testament. The title of the completed work, which, though only one in a long series of revisions, has come to be known as *par excellence* the REVISED VERSION, ran simply :

“The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments translated out of the original tongues : being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised.”

It might have been expected that, if only on the ground of its greater faithfulness to the original, the new version would speedily have supplanted the old in general use. But whether it be owing to a natural conservatism with regard to a version, hallowed by so long a history and by so many sacred memories, or to certain blemishes of force and style often attributed to the Revised Version itself, this has not



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proved to be the case. And there seems to be a growing danger that even students will not continue to avail themselves so fully as they ought of the invaluable assistance which the new version brings within their reach.

It is to try and obviate this, and show how much may be learned from a comparative study of the two versions that the remaining sections of this little book have been written.



## PART II

### THE PRACTICAL USE OF THE REVISED VERSION





## I

### NEGATIVELY—ITS REMOVING OF DIFFICULTIES

WHAT was said at the close of the previous section will have shown that it is not the substitution of the Revised for the Authorized Version that we are at present pleading for. That, if it ever takes place, can only be brought about through the new Version's gradually winning its way through its own superior merits, as the old in its time had to do. All that we are in the meantime concerned with is the value to all Bible students of a careful study of the two versions side by side, and the fresh light which in consequence is continually cast upon the best-known words and scenes.

#### I. IT ARRESTS ATTENTION.

We begin then at once by noticing that this comparative study of the two versions,

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even if it does nothing else, is of the utmost importance to the ordinary reader in arresting his attention.

We all know how our very familiarity with the language of Scripture is apt to lead to our reading in a careless, perfunctory way, supplying words and finishing verses it may be from memory, and so falling into many inaccuracies and errors. But when we read with a Parallel New Testament in our hands, comparing verse with verse, and word with word, we are constantly being brought up by some slight, though it may prove very significant, change, and so being led to inquire what exactly the sacred writer says.

For here let me dispose in passing of the objection sometimes brought against the Revised Version by those who have only examined it superficially—namely, that the changes in it from the Authorized Version are neither numerous enough nor important enough to make it worth while referring to. Of the importance of the changes we shall learn more directly ; but,

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as regards their number, it has been estimated that in the New Testament "there are in all over 36,000 departures from King James's Version in the English text, and (probably included in the former) nearly 6000 changes in the Greek text."<sup>1</sup> I know, of course, the counter-objection that will at once be raised, that many of these changes are quite unnecessary, and in no way affect the sense. But when we remember that in the case of changes caused by a variety of reading in the original Greek, a majority of two-thirds of the Company present had to be secured on the final revision, and that no change was adopted without being first carefully scrutinized in the interests of faithfulness by a large and representative body of scholars, we may be sure that all merit our most careful consideration, and contribute their share in bringing out the true meaning of the text.

To return, however, to the point immediately before us, "it would not, I imagine"—

<sup>1</sup> See Schaff, *A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version*, New York, 1883, p. 418.

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and here I gladly avail myself of the weighty words of Archbishop Trench<sup>1</sup> — “be for most of us unprofitable to discover that the words in which the truth has hitherto reached us, are exchangeable for other, in some places, it may be, for better, words. The shock, unpleasant and unwelcome as it would perhaps prove at the first, might yet be a startling of many from a dull, lethargic, unprofitable reading of God’s Word; a breaking up of that hard crust of formality which so easily overgrows our study of the Scripture; while in the rousing of the energies of the mind to defend the old, or, before admitting, thoroughly to test the new, more insight into it might be gained, with more grasp of its deeper meaning, than years of lazy familiarity would have given.”

An example may make this clearer. Let us take a very familiar passage, which bears directly upon our work as preachers and teachers, the Parable of the Sower in Matt. xiii. 1–23. In the Revised Version

<sup>1</sup> *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, London, 1859, p. 214 f.

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it opens not "Behold a sower went forth to sow," but "Behold the sower," where the definite article, if it does not suggest some sower actually at work in a field close at hand, at least points to him as the representative of his whole class. It is "as he sowed" too, as he was carrying out his purpose, in the very process of sowing,<sup>1</sup> that the things about to be related happened. Passing over such slight changes as "the birds" for "the fowls" and "devoured them" for "devoured them up" in ver. 4, we come in ver. 5 to the important substitution of "upon the rocky places" for "upon stony places." The latter naturally leads us to think of a field covered with loose stones, which is clearly out of keeping with the fate of the seed which fell upon it. Indeed it is often just such fields which are the most productive, through the stones helping the soil to retain its moisture. Whereas the "rocky places" bring before us a characteristic feature of the corn-lands of Galilee—a rocky bed covered over with

<sup>1</sup> ἐν τῷ σπείρειν αὐτόν.



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a thin sprinkling of earth, in which the seed from its nearness to the warm surface would spring up quickly, but would as quickly wither away. Again it is "upon the thorns" and not "among thorns" that other seeds fell, upon soil, that is, in which the seeds of thorns lay already lurking, rather than among growing and flourishing thorn-plants, which every sower would be careful to avoid. While once more we cannot but recognize the precision which the definite article again gives to the fourth kind of soil, "the good ground," though unfortunately our English idiom prevents us giving its proper emphasis to the article which in the Greek text is again repeated before the adjective—"the ground" which (in contrast to the kinds of ground already mentioned) is specifically "the good" ground.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, to pass to our Lord's interpretation of the Parable, it is "the evil one" rather than "the wicked one," the same Enemy from whom we are taught to ask

<sup>1</sup> τὴν γῆν τὴν καλήν.

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deliverance in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 13, R.V.), who snatcheth away that which "hath been sown," the perfect participle bringing out that, while the sowing was completed, the seed still lay undisturbed in the heart of the wayside hearer. Or as this hearer is described in words which identify the seed with the person receiving it, a truth quite lost sight of in the Authorised rendering, "This is he that was sown by the way side." Just as the seed reproduces itself in the grain, so the living truth reproduces itself in the heart of all by whom it is welcomed—a further assurance of what in our teaching we need so constantly to be reminded of, that at best we are sowers: the word of the Lord must be left to find its own "*free* course," or more literally to "run and be glorified" (2 Thess. iii. 1, R.V.).

In the next class of hearers again the Revised Version alone preserves the parallel between the ofttimes hasty reception and the equally hasty rejection of the Word—"straightway with joy receiveth it . . .

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straightway he stumbleth." The changes of "by and by" into "straightway" and "is offended" into "stumbleth" in this last clause have also their interest. Even at the time when the Authorized Version was made, "by and by" was beginning to lose some of its original force of "immediately," and this weakening tendency, owing to the procrastinating habits of men, has gone steadily on, so that now we always refer "by and by" to a more or less remote period. But the Greek word<sup>1</sup> here means "at once," "straightway," and should be rendered accordingly. "Stumbleth," again, is a clear gain over "is offended," which conveys to any but the educated reader an altogether different sense from what is intended. And yet once more, we are now told of the good hearer not that he "also beareth fruit," a self-evident proposition, but that he "verily" beareth it. Fruit is the certain result of his being good.

So far then from a close attention to the exact words of the original being profit-

<sup>1</sup> εὐθύς.

## Its Removing of Difficulties

less, enough has, I hope, been said to prove that it at least leads us to ask, What exactly did our Lord or His Evangelist say? and so awakens interest and stimulates inquiry even with regard to those points which we think that we have perfectly understood before.

### 2. IT CLEARS UP MANY OBSCURITIES.

But the Revised Version does more than this. It makes clear the meaning of many words and phrases which, as they stand in the older version, are, if not actually unintelligible, certainly obscure.

Take a very obvious class of examples which has been suggested to us already. In the Authorized Version, owing to the period when it was written and its subsequent long history, there is necessarily an archaic style and mode of speech. And so far well. It lifts the sacred language of Scripture above all mere colloquialism, and gives it a strength and dignity of its own. One has only to glance at some of

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the attempts which have been made to modernize the diction of our version to see how terribly it has suffered in the process.

But it is different with regard to those words and phrases which have so altered their meaning since the Authorized Version was made that they are now liable to be understood in an altogether misleading sense. Here obviously some change has to be made. A very commonly cited instance is the familiar precept, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink" (Matt. vi. 25), which at first sight seems to conflict strangely with the well-established rules of prudence and thrift. But in old English "thought" had a note of anxiety attached to it, which it has now lost, and therefore to bring out the full force of the original, we require to render with the Revised Version, "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink." Similarly Phil. iv. 6 now runs: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made



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known to God," and 1 Pet. v. 7 : " Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He careth for you," where a significant distinction of words lost in our English Version (" Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you ") is also brought out.

In like manner, " occupy " is no longer understood in its old sense of " lay hold of," " employ," " trade," so that it is properly replaced by the last term in the Parable of the Pounds, " Trade ye *herewith* till I come " (Luke xix. 13), with the further advantage of preserving the parallel with the statement two verses later, " what they had gained by trading." And the same applies to the substitution of " wallet " for " scrip " (Matt. x. 10), a word which is apt to be taken in its modern business meaning,<sup>1</sup> and of " interest " for " usury " (Matt. xxv. 27), which is now only used of illegal

<sup>1</sup> The reference to the " wallet " gains still further in significance, if, with Dr. Deissmann (*New Light on the New Testament*, p. 41 ff.), we understand by it not a travelling-bag, but a beggar's collecting-bag : the disciples were not even to beg.

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or exorbitant transactions. We seem too to have a reversal of the usual process when in Acts xxi. 15 we are told that St. Paul and his companions "took up" their "carriages," until we learn from the Revised Version, that "carriages" is here the old word for "baggage." And there is no longer the danger of its distinctively modern meaning being attached to "compass" when in the account of St. Paul's voyage to Italy we read with the Revisers, "we made a circuit" rather than "we fetched a compass," and arrived at Rhegium (Acts xxviii. 13).

It would be easy to carry this line of illustration further, but it must be sufficient to draw attention to one or two words which have practically reversed their meaning since 1611. Thus the verb "let" was then = "hinder," though now we use it in the sense of "permit," and though the context might prevent us from misunderstanding such a passage as Rom. i. 13, "And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let (R.V. hindered)

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hitherto),” the very obscure verse, 2 Thess. ii. 7, is undoubtedly rendered still more difficult to the ordinary reader by the translation: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.” It is a “restraining” not a “permitting” power that is in view, in conformity with ver. 6, where the same Greek word occurs, and this at least is made clear when we read: “And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he [*i.e.* the man of lawlessness] may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only *there is* one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one. . . .”

Or, to take another example suggested by this last, how many fail to realize that in Matt. xvii. 25, “Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon?” really means, as Tindale had already shown, “Jesus spake first to him, saying . . .,” or that in 1 Thess. iv. 15 those who are alive

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at the Parousia shall not in our sense “prevent them which are asleep,” but rather shall “precede” them. The Thessalonians’ fear was that those who were already dead when Christ came would have no part in His Resurrection. So far from this being the case, the Apostle assures them that it is the dead in Christ who shall rise first, to be followed by those who are alive, who are left, at the time.

What an added force, too, is given by the disappearance of the archaic “presently” in Matt. xxi. 19, “And immediately the fig-tree withered away,” and in Matt. xxvi. 53, “Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and He shall even now send Me more than twelve legions of angels?”

Or, to take one instance from the very numerous examples that might be cited from the prepositions, when St. Paul states in 1 Cor. iv. 4, “For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord,” we naturally think that the Apostle means that for all his knowledge he was dependent

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not on himself, but on God, whereas “by” is used in its old English sense of “against,” which, to avoid misunderstanding, has been substituted for it in the Revised Version, “For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.” St. Paul is at the moment on his defence, and with reference to certain charges that have been brought against him by the Corinthians, he declares that it is for him “a very small thing” to be judged “of man’s judgement,” nor is he conscious in his own mind of having done them any wrong. And yet, after all, he does not rest his justification on this, but rather leaves all in the hands of God, the one true Judge.

But unintelligibility in the Authorized Version does not only arise in this way. With all our admiration, and it can hardly be too strongly expressed, for the manner in which the translation as a whole has been executed, it cannot be denied that there are many passages to which, as they stand at present, little or no sense can be attached.



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The most noticeable examples of these perhaps occur in the Old Testament in such books as Job and the Psalms, but examples may also be cited from the Gospels. Let me mention two, where I venture to think their very familiarity with the words has in many cases prevented readers from realizing that they do not, and indeed cannot, understand them in the ordinary version.

The first occurs in Mark vii. 10-12 : "For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother : and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me : *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father, or his mother." Now, what do these words mean ? Without the aid of some note or comment no ordinary reader can tell. But when we read them in the Revised Version we are at least put on the right lines for understanding them, though even then, from the difficulty of the subject, some further explanation

## Its Removing of Difficulties

is probably required : “ For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother ; and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death : but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is *Corban*, that is to say, Given to God ; ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother.” What is referred to is the Jewish custom, according to which a person had merely to pronounce the word *Corban* over any possession, and it was irrevocably dedicated to the Temple, and could consequently be no longer used for the benefit even of his parents.

My second example occurs in the same chapter a few verses lower down. Jesus has been explaining to His disciples the importance of inward, as contrasted with outward, defilement, and He proceeds, “ Are ye so without understanding also ? Do ye not perceive that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him, because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth

## Value of the Revised Version

- . out into the draught, purging all meats ? ” Again, as it stands, this last clause is meaningless. But by the change of a single letter in the Greek a new reading is gained, and the verse now concludes—“ *This He said*, making all meats clean,” being the Evangelist’s comment upon what he has just recorded, a comment that gains still further in significance when we remember that St. Mark’s Gospel was in all probability largely dependent upon the recollections of the Apostle Peter, who was taught in so striking a manner that in God’s sight nothing is common or unclean (Acts x. 9-16). How in later life St. Peter, brooding on his vision, must have loved to connect it with those words of His Master, enforcing, though he had not at the time understood them, the same truth !

### 3. IT CORRECTS ERRONEOUS IDEAS.

Another use of the Revised Version lies in the erroneous ideas which it corrects and the difficulties which it removes. Let us

## Its Removing of Difficulties

take one or two examples under each of these heads.

First, erroneous ideas which are corrected. In the list of the Twelve Apostles in St. Matthew's Gospel we must have been astonished, or should have been astonished, if we had stopped to think, to find one of them described as "Simon the Canaanite" (x. 4), as if he belonged to the heathen stock which the Israelites had failed to root wholly out of the Promised Land. But the true reading is "Simon the Cananæan" or, as the margin suggests, "Simon the Zealot," proving that, before Christ's grace seized him and converted him into a Christian disciple, Simon had belonged to that Jewish faction, who thought any deed of violence justifiable for the recovery of national freedom.

Similarly, to turn to a very different case, when Herodias' daughter danced before King Herod, and he promised her what she would ask, "she," so we read in our ordinary version, "being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's

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head in a charger ” (Matt. xiv. 8). But the Revised Version, correctly following the Greek, has, “ And she, being put forward by her mother, saith . . . ” clearly indicating that the girl herself was unwilling to make such a proposal, and had to be “ put forward,”<sup>1</sup> urged on, as it were, by her angry and revengeful mother, until, at length, as we learn from Mark vi. 25, “ she came in straightway with haste unto the King, and asked, saying, I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist,” as if it were an errand she would gladly have quickly over.

Turning to difficulties removed by the Revised Version, the statement of Luke iii. 23 that after His Baptism, “ Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age,” is, to say the least, somewhat unintelligible. But there is no reason for any perplexity. What the original says implies that “ Jesus Himself, when He began *to teach* (so the

<sup>1</sup> The same Greek verb (προβιβάζω) occurs in the Received Text of Acts xix. 33, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ὄχλου προεβίβασαν Ἀλέξανδρον.



## Its Removing of Difficulties

Revised Version fills up the blank), was about thirty years of age." A proper attention to the Greek again enables us to appreciate the force of the woman's argument in Matt. xv. 27, for she does not say, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table," but, "for even the dogs . . ." In the very appellation which the Lord had used, she finds ground for assurance and hope.

Exactness of rendering similarly restores harmony between the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Luke as to the spot from which the Sermon on the Mount was spoken. In our old version the statements seem directly contradictory. According to the former, Jesus "went up into a mountain : . . . and He opened His mouth, and taught . . ." (Matt. v. 1, 2) : whereas the latter tells us, "He came down . . ., and stood in the plain," and only then "lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor " (Luke vi. 17, 20). But when we read with the Revised Version in the latter case, "and stood on a level place," we see

## Value of the Revised Version

that what happened was this. On the previous evening Jesus went up "into the mountain"—where the definite article is to be taken as pointing to the mountainous region or barrier overhanging the Lake of Galilee—and there spent the night in prayer. In the morning He chose His Twelve Apostles, and then, going with them to some "level spot" in the midst of this hilly country, preached to them and to the multitudes who had gathered round.

In like manner the Revised Version is successful in removing popular misapprehensions, if not actual difficulties, in not a few well-known passages. Thus in the Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke xvi. 1 ff.) the substitution of "his lord" for "the lord" in ver. 8 makes it perfectly clear that it was his earthly master, and not God, who "commended the unrighteous steward," while the injunction, "Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness," sets the lesson drawn in a very different light from "Make to

## Its Removing of Difficulties

yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," and the gain is further increased by the correct reading in the following clause, "that, when it"—that is, the mammon of unrighteousness, and not "ye," as in the Authorized Version—"shall fail, they (the friends whom you have thus made) may receive you into the eternal tabernacles."

Any doubt as to the true meaning of the words which introduce the Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, as they were originally printed in 1611—"And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised other" (Luke xviii. 9)—is set at rest by the fuller and more exact "and set all others at nought." And of still greater importance is the correction a few verses further on, where the Pharisees' boast reads, "I give tithes of all that I get," instead of "of all that I possess"—the tithe was paid not on what he possessed or had laid up, but on what he acquired in the way of increase. Similar

## Value of the Revised Version

attention to the tense of the same Greek verb in Luke xxi. 19 shows that our Lord did not intend to enforce the duty of holding fast what is ours already, "In your patience possess ye your souls," but, in view of the troublous times that were impending, cheered His disciples with the promise—"In your patience ye shall win your souls."<sup>1</sup>

Other passages which show gains in clearness are Matt. xxii. 8, 13, where the marginal notes show that two classes of servants are referred to, the "bond-servants" or slaves, who were sent to bid the guests to the Marriage Feast, and the "ministers" or angels, to whom was afterwards entrusted the carrying out of the sentence of doom; Matt. xxiii. 35, "Zachariah . . . whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar, where the "sanctuary," or inner shrine of the Temple, is distinguished from the whole Temple precincts; and Matt. xvii. 25, where the Revisers, by substituting "half-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also 1 Thess. iv. 4, where the translation of the verb is again amended.

## Its Removing of Difficulties

shekel” for “tribute money,” show that the reference is not to any civil tax, but to the half-shekel which was payable to the Temple annually by every Jew over twenty years of age (see Exod. xxx. 13).



## II

### POSITIVELY — ITS ADVANTAGES AS COMPARED WITH THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

#### I. IT ADDS GRAPHIC TOUCHES TO MANY NARRATIVES.

A POSITIVE gain from the use of the Revised Version lies in the graphic touches in which it abounds, enabling us to picture to ourselves Gospel scenes in a way which was before impossible.

Sometimes this results from a more vivid rendering of the original, as in Mark i. 27, where, after the healing of the man with the unclean spirit, the multitude are represented as questioning amongst themselves, saying, "What is this? a new teaching! with authority He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him"; or in ch. ix. 22 f. when, to the

## Advantages of Revised Version

prayer of the father of the demoniac boy, "If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us," Jesus replies, catching up his words, and retorting his condition on himself, "If thou canst!"—this is no question of My being able, but of thy being able—"All things are possible to him that believeth"; or, in the Parable of the Virgins, where the suddenness of the bridegroom's arrival is brought clearly out, "But at midnight there is a cry, Behold the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him" (Matt. xxv. 6).

Or, to turn to a different set of examples, we have seen already, in the case of the Parable of the Sower, the gain in graphicness from the proper recognition of the definite article, and numerous similar instances can be cited. Thus it was from "the pinnacle of the temple," some well-known pinnacle, that the devil wished Jesus to cast Himself down (Matt. iv. 5; Luke iv. 9); "into the mountain," the high ground overlooking the Lake of Galilee, that Jesus went up when He spoke the

## Value of the Revised Version

Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 1) ; down "the steep," the equally characteristic steep precipices at a little distance from the Lake, that the herd of swine rushed (Matt. viii. 32) ; "in the open street" rather than the indefinite "in a place where two ways met" that the disciples were directed to find the colt (Mark xi. 4) ; "the branches of the palm trees," that lined the side of the road, that the multitudes carried in welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem (John xii. 13) ; and "the seats of them that sold the doves," which were required by the Law for the purposes of religious offering, that Jesus overthrew (Matt. xxi. 12 ; Mark xi. 15). In St. Mark's narrative of this last incident there is a further correction of the same kind, "all the nations" for "all nations," along with one of those slight changes which at first sight seem of no special significance, but have an important bearing on the sense. Our Lord's words, as given in the Authorized Version, are, "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of

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prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves." But in the Revised Version the words run, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations," and thereby not only is the passage brought into exact agreement with the prophecy in Isaiah from which it is taken (Isa. lvi. 7), but its full force is given to our Lord's condemnation of the Jews. To them perhaps it had seemed a matter of small moment that the outer court, the court of the Gentiles, should be profaned, so long as the inner court, belonging especially to themselves, was kept holy; whereas, as Jesus now reminded them, it had been announced by one of their own prophets that His house was to be sacred alike to the Gentile as to the Jew—"a house of prayer for all the nations."

On the other hand, there are not a few passages in which the older translators have wrongly inserted a definite article when there is none in the original. In Luke ii. 12 the significance of the angelic sign to the shepherds lay in the fact that

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they would find not "the babe," but "a babe," a babe to all outward appearance like any human babe, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." In John iv. 27 the disciples marvelled not because their Master was speaking "with the woman," as if they already knew all about this particular woman's past history, but "with a woman," any woman, contrary to the Rabbinical precept that prohibited all conversation with one of the other sex in public. In Acts xvii. 23 the point of the inscription on the altar at Athens lay in the fact that it was addressed, "To an Unknown God." And in 1 Tim. vi. 10 the love of money is not described as "the root of all evil," as if there were no other, but as "a root," one out of many, "of all kinds of evil."

The proper translation of the tenses also lends additional force to many passages. Thus who does not feel the lifelike reality of the present in such verses as Matt. iii. 1, "And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa" (especially when taken with the

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parallel in ver. 13, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan"), and still more noticeably perhaps in St. Mark's Gospel, where the Saviour is specially depicted in His Divine energy and power, passing from place to place on errands of mercy—"And they go into Capernaum" (i. 21), "And they found Him, and say unto Him, All are seeking Thee" (i. 37), "And straightway Jesus . . . saith unto them" (ii. 8), "And He cometh into a house" (iii. 19), "And there come His mother and His brethren . . . And they say unto Him . . . And He answereth them, and saith . . . And looking round on them . . . He saith . . ." (iii. 31 ff.), and so in numerous other passages throughout the Gospel.

Or, passing from the present to the imperfect tense, instead of the general statement that "the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast," we learn from the resolved form of imperfect employed that they actually "were fasting" <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ἦσαν . . . νηστεύοντες.

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—were observing one of the weekly fasts which the stricter schools of Judaism enforced—at the very time when the disciples of Jesus had been engaged in feasting (Mark ii. 18). And all must recognize the new vividness imparted by a close observance of the tense to such passages from the Fourth Gospel as, “And the sea was rising by reason of a great wind that blew” (vi. 18), “Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon’s porch” (x. 23), “The disciples say unto Him, Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone Thee” (xi. 8). In Matt. iii. 14, again, a too great definiteness is given to the attitude of John towards Jesus, when He came to be baptized, by the rendering, “But John forbade Him.” We have rather here an example of the inchoate force of the imperfect, which the Revisers have preserved by translating, “But John would have hindered Him.” And similarly in Luke i. 59, with reference to the bestowal of the Baptist’s own name we read not, “They called him,” but “They would have called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.” Another

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significant touch in the same Gospel, which unfortunately has been put in the margin, lies in the statement that the woman who was a sinner “kissed much” Jesus’ feet (vii. 38), or, still better, “kept on kissing” them.

We shall have to return to the new force given to many doctrinal passages by the proper translation of the Greek aorist (see p. 104 f.), but meanwhile it may be well to notice one or two perfects, where the abiding force of the action described is now brought out. A simple example is afforded by John iv. 37 f. : “For herein is the saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not laboured : others have laboured (A.V. laboured), and ye are entered into their labours,” where, as Bishop Westcott has pointed out, “the labours of earlier toilers for God are regarded not merely in the past, but as bearing fruit in the present.”<sup>1</sup>

Or to take another example, to which the same writer has drawn special attention, in

<sup>1</sup> *Some Lessons of the Revised Version of the New Testament*, London, 1897, p. 52.



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view of its bearing on the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. In John xix. 35 the Authorized Version reads, "He that saw it bare record, and his record is true," where the use of the past tense has been claimed as showing that the writer was referring to an earlier witness now dead, and not to himself, or he would have used the perfect. But that is exactly what he did, "And he that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true." And thus the corrected rendering actually turns the force of the argument in the opposite direction.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. IT THROWS LIGHT ON EASTERN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

Nothing helps more to bring home to a congregation or class that the Bible is a real book dealing with the lives of real men and women, as to take every opportunity of pointing out to them the indications it contains of the marked differences

<sup>1</sup> *Some Lessons of the Revised Version of the New Testament*, p. 52.

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between the Eastern and our Western mode of life. No doubt these differences can hardly be grasped from the Bible narrative alone, without the aid of such well-known books as Dr. William M. Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, or the Rev. G. M. Mackie's *Bible Manners and Customs*, but the more exact renderings of the Revised Version, and especially the literal translations from the Greek contained in the margins, at least suggest points for inquiry.

Thus the reference to thieves "who dig through" and steal (Matt. vi. 19) points to the mud walls of which many of the Jewish houses were built. The bottles which were liable to burst with new wine were "wineskins" or "skins used as bottles" (Matt. ix. 17) which had become cracked and shrivelled in the smoke. It was a "cruse" or a "flask" of ointment, not a "box," which the woman poured over Jesus' head in Simon's house (Matt. xxvi. 7); and certainly not a "writing-table," as we understand it, but a "writing tablet," the small tablet smeared with wax on which

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### 3. IT ESTABLISHES CONNEXIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT PARTS OF SCRIPTURE.

This often arises from the observance of the rule, to which as far as possible the Revisers have adhered, of adopting a uniform rendering throughout for the same word or phrase. The opposite, as is well known, was rather the practice of the Translators of 1611. "Another thing," they say in their Preface, "we think good to admonish thee of (gentle Reader) that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done. . . . Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before . . . we were especially careful. . . . But, that we should express the same notion in the same particular word . . . we thought to savour more of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorn in the Atheist than bring profit to the godly Reader. For is

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the kingdom of God become words or syllables ? ”

But ingenious though this pleading is, it is clear that, if the principal object of a translation is to put the modern reader as nearly as possible in the same position as the reader of the original, this can only be attained by the same word in the original getting as far as possible the same rendering in the translation.

The most important gains in this direction occur probably in the Epistles, but they are to be found also in the Gospels. Thus, if the Greek adverb for “straightway”<sup>1</sup> forms one of the keywords of St. Mark’s Gospel, occurring in it no fewer than forty times, it is obvious that this should not be obscured by its receiving five different renderings — “straightway,” “immediately,” “forthwith,” “anon,” and “as soon as”; while the equally characteristic “abide”<sup>2</sup> of St. John’s Gospel is rendered indiscriminately “abide,” “remain,” “dwell,” “continue,” “tarry,” and “en-

<sup>1</sup> εὐθέως.

<sup>2</sup> μένω.

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ture," two of these different renderings being sometimes actually used in the same verse.

Who too does not recognize the gain of bringing out the connexion in Luke iv. 1 between the statement Jesus, "full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan," and the statement "was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days"—a connexion obscured in the Authorized Version by the use in the first case of the archaic word "Ghost":<sup>1</sup> between our Lord's sad admission in John iii. 11, "Ye receive not our witness," and the taking up by the Evangelist of the same word a few verses further on, "And no man receiveth His witness" (ver. 32): between, to take another example of the same emphatic word, "He (*i.e.* the Spirit of truth) shall bear witness of Me," and the immediately following, "Ye also

<sup>1</sup> It is one of the gains of the American edition of the Revised New Testament that the rendering "Holy Spirit" is uniformly adopted for "Holy Ghost." The whole list of readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee, as recorded at the close of our Revised Testament, should be carefully studied.



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bear witness" (John xv. 26, 27) : between our Lord's injunction, "Work not for the meat which perisheth . . .," and the disciples' eager question, "What must we do, that we may work the works of God?" (John vi. 27, 28) : between the identity of the sin and its punishment, "He will miserably destroy those miserable men" (Matt. xxi. 41)<sup>1</sup> : and, a happier example, between the teaching, "Every *branch* that beareth fruit He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit," and the gracious assurance, showing that this work was accomplished in the Apostles, "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (John xv. 2, 3).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the amended renderings of 1 Cor. iii. 17, "If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy"; Col. iii. 25 (margin), "For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done"; and 2 Pet. ii. 12, "But these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed."

<sup>2</sup> See also such passages as Rom. iv. 3-8; 1 Cor. xi. 28-34; Rev. iv. 2-4.

# Value of the Revised Version

## 4. OTHER EXAMPLES.

These examples have been taken from within the New Testament itself, but there is another class of connexions which it is most important to observe, the connexions, namely, between the New Testament and the Old, between the later and the earlier Dispensation. We have our Lord's own distinct statement that He came not "to destroy," but "to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17); and it is in perfect harmony with this that a little later in the same discourse He places His own teaching in contrast not with what was said "by them of old time," but with what was said "to them of old time" (ver. 21). So far from annulling God's previous Revelation, He only carried it on to a higher stage by the substitution of the inward for the outward, the spirit for the letter.

Therefore it is that, in the accounts of the institution of the Last Supper, we welcome the change of "testament," a word now

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generally used in a definite and restricted sense, into the familiar Old Testament "covenant" (Matt. xxvi. 28 and parallels, 1 Cor. xi. 25), so bringing this last and highest proof of God's love into direct line with all His previous promises of grace; and, in the multitude's testimony regarding Jesus, the substitution of the definite article for the over-translated "that"—"This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world" (John vi. 14), so carrying back our thoughts to the well-known prophet of Deut. xviii. 15, for whose advent the Jews had been anxiously waiting.

Similarly, in the case of another of our Lord's titles, we know how ready the Evangelists, and especially the Evangelist Matthew, were to see in His ministry the fulfilment of the prophecy regarding "the servant of the Lord" in Isa. lii. 13 ff. It is most unfortunate, therefore, that this connexion should be obscured to the ordinary English reader of the Book of Acts by the substitution of "son" or "child" for "servant" in ch. iii. 13, 26, iv. 27, 30.

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Passing to Proper Names, the Revisers of the New Testament have not hesitated for the sake of greater clearness to depart from the Greek forms which, as a rule, were followed in the Authorized Version, and to recur to the Hebrew forms with which we have become familiar in the Old. "Let us just seek to realize to ourselves," says Archbishop Trench, "the difference in the amount of awakened attention among a country congregation, which Matt. xvii. 10 would arouse, if it were read thus, 'And His disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the Scribes that *Elijah* must first come?' as compared with what it now is likely to create. *Elijah* is a person to them; the same who once raised the widow's son, who on Mount Carmel challenged and overcame alone the army of the prophets of Baal, who went up in a fire-chariot to heaven. *Elias* is for them but a name."<sup>1</sup> But this gain and many similar ones are now secured to us. "Abijah," "Hezekiah," "Isaiah," "Zechariah," "Elisha," "Judæa," meet us,

<sup>1</sup> *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, p. 74.

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where before we had the at best vague designations, "Abia," "Ezekias," "Esaïas," "Zacharias," "Eliseus," "Jewry" (Matt. i. 7, 10, iii. 3, xxiii. 35, Luke iv. 27, xxiii. 5) : while "Sharon" now takes the place of "Saron" in Acts ix. 35, and "Kish" of "Cis" in Acts xiii. 21.

Any confusion caused by these last examples may seem of comparatively little moment, but it is different with the use in the Authorized Version of the name "Jesus" in Acts vii. 45 and Heb. iv. 8. By the ordinary reader that name is at once taken as referring to the Person of our Lord Himself, and only when his Revised Version shows him that it is the Old Testament "Joshua" who is intended, can he understand the two passages properly.

One other instance must be noticed in this connexion. By us "Christ" has come to be recognized as a Proper Name, and as such it is constantly used in the Authorized Version without the definite article. But as a matter of fact the word is always employed in the Gospels, with certain



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trifling exceptions,<sup>1</sup> as a title or designation. It is "the Christ," the Messiah, who is thought of, who may, or may not, be identified with the historical Jesus, according to the faith of the speaker. Thus Herod inquires "where the Christ should be born" (Matt. ii. 4); John the Baptist, when he hears in his prison "the works of the Christ," sends and asks, "Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" (Matt. xi. 2, 3); and our Lord Himself meets the perplexities of the two disciples on the Emmaus road with the question, "Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things?" (Luke xxiv. 26). The disciples, trusting to their own interpretation of the Scriptures, were turning away from a suffering and crucified Messiah; but now from these very Scriptures the Risen Redeemer showed them that it was just because of His sufferings that He was the Messiah, that "the Christ" behoved "to suffer . . . and to enter into His glory."

So true is it, that it is the end which is the

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Matt. i. 1; Mark i. 1; John i. 17.

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true test of every revelation, as we are again reminded in the revised rendering of one of our Lord's most familiar words. For it is not so much an injunction, "Search the Scriptures," that He lays upon His disciples, as a warning against putting these same Scriptures in a wrong place. "Ye search the Scriptures," so the translation now runs, "because ye think that in them ye have eternal life"—you substitute, that is, the Book for the Person—forgetting that "these [Scriptures] are they which bear witness of Me; and ye will not come to Me, that ye may have life" (John v. 39, 40). It is a warning of which we cannot be reminded too often, for only as our study of Holy Writ is drawing us ever closer to Him Who is not only "the Way" but "the Truth," and not only "the Truth" but "the Life," can we hope to find life either for ourselves or for those whom we are called upon to teach.



PART III

THE DOCTRINAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE  
REVISED VERSION





## I

### THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

IN the foregoing section, while ample testimony was borne to the greater accuracy and clearness of the new version, little or nothing was said of its doctrinal significance. It is not uncommon, indeed, to hear it stated that the Revised Version has no direct bearing upon doctrine, and that, whatever other changes it may effect, it will at least leave the cardinal articles of the Christian faith exactly where it found them.

In a sense, no doubt, this statement is true. Though the witness of particular texts may be altered, or even disappear altogether, as in the case of the famous proof-text for the Trinity (1 John v. 7), the general balance of doctrinal truth remains

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unchanged. No essential article of our creed is lost. But this is not to say that no new light is cast upon any of these articles, or that a more intimate acquaintance with the exact form in which the truths of Revelation were first announced may not lead to a considerable modification in much of our popular theology. It is impossible in our present limits to establish this as fully as one would like. The utmost that can be attempted is to indicate a few of the passages in which the changes made by the Revisers, whether caused by an improved text or a more exact translation of the original, appear to have a bearing upon doctrinal truth.

### I. THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

Thus, to begin with the doctrine of our Lord's person, when we turn to the much disputed passage, 1 Tim. iii. 16, it is to find that the Revisers in their marginal note pronounce strongly in favour of the reading "He Who" instead of "God," and in con-

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sequence translate, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; He Who was manifested in the flesh." We seem at first sight only to have loss. The passage in this form can no longer be quoted as a direct testimony to the Godhead of Christ, but indirectly it surely implies this in no uncertain way. Only of One Who Himself existed before, could it be said that He was "manifested in the flesh." But, even if it were otherwise, we are not dependent upon this text for the proof of Christ's Divinity, and any supposed loss in this direction is more than made up by the new and striking witness which we gain to the personality of our religion. For it is not, as we would naturally expect, a neuter relative which follows the Greek word for "mystery," but a masculine pronoun: "the mystery—who."<sup>1</sup> The mystery is not a thing, but a Person, not any propositions about Christ, but Christ Himself: He Who was manifested, justified, seen, preached, believed on, received up in

<sup>1</sup> μυστήριον ὅς.

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glory.<sup>1</sup> Or, as the same truth is expressed in the amended version of Col. ii. 2, "the mystery of God, *even* Christ."<sup>2</sup> While with the description which follows, "in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden," we may compare the words of ch. i. 19, "For it was the good pleasure *of the Father* that in Him should all the fulness dwell," rendered still more emphatically in the margin, "For the whole fulness *of God* was pleased to dwell in Him." The Son of God's love (i. 13),<sup>3</sup> in (A.V., by) whom all things were created (ver. 16), and unto (A.V., for) whom, as to their goal, all things tend, is Himself distinguished not merely by "all fulness," but by "the whole fulness," the Pleroma of all the Divine attributes and powers.

<sup>1</sup> See a striking sermon on "Personality of the Gospel" by Dean Vaughan, in *Authorized or Revised?* London, 1882, p. 3 ff.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the reading in this verse is very uncertain.

<sup>3</sup> How much more expressive than "His dear Son"! Cf. Augustine *de Trinit.* xv. 19: "Filius caritatis ejus nullus est alius, quam qui de substantiâ ejus est genitus."

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Other passages which, in their revised form, bear more or less distinctly on the Divinity of our Lord are John v. 18, where the adjective is recognized as having the full emphatic force, which it does not always possess in late Greek, "but also called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God"; Acts xvi. 7, where the striking reading "the Spirit of Jesus" (not simply, as in the Authorised Version, "the Spirit") implies that the Holy Spirit had so taken possession of the Person of the Exalted Jesus that He could be spoken of as "the Spirit of Jesus"; 2 Cor. iv. 5, where the sum of Apostolic teaching is declared to be the preaching of "Christ Jesus as Lord," "Lord" in the Pauline Epistles being apparently generally used with reference to the risen and glorified Redeemer; Tit. ii. 13, where a slight change in the translation and improved punctuation show that "the appearing of the glory," the fulfilment, that is, of the symbolical appearances of "the glory of the Lord" in the Old Testament, is associated with "our great



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God and Saviour Jesus Christ," not two persons, but one (cf. 2 Pet. i. 1); and 1 Pet. iii. 15, "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord," where, in borrowing his language from Isa. viii. 13, the Apostle directly identifies *Christ* with *Jehovah*, and so attests His deity in the most unequivocal manner. Archbishop Alexander indeed singles out this verse as more than any other assuring him of the Divinity of Jesus, and adds that its "restoration to its rightful force outweighs nearly all that can be said against the Revised Version."<sup>1</sup>

To these may be added the remarkable marginal rendering "God only begotten," in John i. 18, which points to One Who is both God and Son<sup>2</sup>; and John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am," where again the marginal note makes clear that different words are used in the original to describe the being of Abraham and of Christ—

<sup>1</sup> *The Divinity of our Lord* (in the series of "Helps to Belief"), p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> μονογενὴς Θεός.

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"Before Abraham was born," came into being from a previous non-existent state, "I am," I necessarily and eternally am.<sup>1</sup> As an example of a slight but significant change, may be mentioned the rendering "offered" for "presented" in Matt. ii. 11, bringing the verse into harmony with the numerous passages in the Septuagint and the New Testament, where the same Greek word is used of religious offerings in worship to God.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to the other side of our Lord's person, His human nature, it must be

<sup>1</sup> πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι, ἐγὼ εἰμι. Cf. 2 Pet. i. 4, "That through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature."

<sup>2</sup> προσφέρω. It may be noted that the significant change of tense in the two occurrences of this verb in Heb. xi. 17 is now brought out in the Revised Version: "By faith Abraham, being tried, hath offered up (margin) Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son." "The first verb [προσενήνοχεν, perfect tense] expresses the permanent result of the offering completed by Abraham in will: the second [προσέφερεν, imperfect tense], his actual readiness in preparing the sacrifice which was not literally carried into effect" (Westcott *ad loc.*).

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sufficient to point to Phil. ii. 5-8 with the accompanying marginal notes, which here, as throughout the Revised Version, are of the utmost value in bringing the exact force of the Greek before the English reader. Starting with the thought of Christ's Divinity, the Apostle proceeds to tell us how He Who was thus originally in the form of God counted not this equality of being with God "a prize," a thing to be grasped at or retained, as compared with what by sacrifice He might effect for our sakes, but "emptied Himself," this great act involving, rather than followed by (as the Authorized Version suggests), the two great steps, "taking the form of a servant (bond-servant)," and "being made (becoming) in the likeness of men," while these in turn led to the lowest step of all, "the death of the Cross." How clearly as we note the changes, and more particularly that one bold expression "emptied Himself," so different from the paraphrastic "made Himself of no reputation," is the tremendous reality of our Lord's humiliation brought

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home to us. And in the verses that follow what new dignity is added to the exaltation by “the (not “a”) name which is above every name,” which God gives to Jesus, “in (not “at”) which every knee should bow.”<sup>1</sup> There can be little doubt that the name here referred to is the human name Jesus, and not the Divine title Lord, as many are tempted to imagine. And in this connexion we may recall such passages as the following, where the use of the simple name fixes the emphasis on the person of the Lord in His true humanity—Luke xxiii. 42, “And he said, Jesus, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom”; 1 John i. 7, “The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin”; and Heb. iii. 1, “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, *even* Jesus.” The

<sup>1</sup> It is curious that the Authorized rendering “at the name of Jesus,” should first be found in the Genevan Testament of 1557, and that consequently this version should have been the means of establishing one of those outward ceremonies against which the Genevan Reformers set themselves so strongly.

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last instance is specially important, in view of the frequency with which in this great Epistle the human name stands alone, and sometimes as here with marked emphasis, with reference to our Lord.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. THE WORK OF CHRIST.

When we pass from the Person to the Work of Christ, the doctrinal consequences attending certain improved renderings are even more significant than those we have already noticed. Thus it is the constant practice of Scripture, and more particularly of the Pauline Epistles, to regard the change wrought in the believer in an ideal light. The change from death to life, though practically only gradually realized, is presented as ideally complete, "summed up," as Bishop Lightfoot puts it, "in one definite act of the past; potentially to all men in our Lord's Passion and Resurrection, actually to each individual man when he accepts

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ch. ii. 9, vi. 20, vii. 22, x. 19, xii. 2, 24, xiii. 12.

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Christ, is baptized into Christ.”<sup>1</sup> And by way of illustration he points to such important doctrinal passages as Rom. vi. 2, 2 Cor. v. 14, and Col. iii. 3, where the Revisers have translated the Greek aorists as referring to a definite past time—“We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?” “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died.” “For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”<sup>2</sup>

The extent of Christ’s redeeming work, as including potentially all mankind, to mention another point, gains also new witness from the Revised Version. Read

<sup>1</sup> *On a Fresh Revision of the English New Testament*, 3rd ed., London, 1891, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> It is a common criticism that the Revisers have carried their renderings of the aorist as a *definite* past too far, and it must be kept in view that our simple past tense does not always coincide in meaning with the Greek aorist, any more than our perfect tense always corresponds with the Greek perfect; see the important statement by Moulton, *Prolegomena to a Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Edinburgh, 1908, p. 135 ff.



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Rom. v. 15-19 as in the Authorized Version, and the benefits of one man's obedience would seem to be confined to "many"; but give the definite articles before "one" and "many" their proper force, as in the Revised Version, and then it will be seen "that *the many*,<sup>1</sup> in an antithesis to *the one*, are equivalent to *all*,<sup>2</sup> in ver. 12, and comprehend the whole multitude, the entire species of mankind, exclusive only of *the one*."<sup>3</sup> The reason why the term, "the many," is used being, as Godet has well pointed out, in order to establish this contrast with the one: "*all* would be opposed to *some*, and not to *one*." "So then as through one trespass *the judgment came* unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness *the free gift came* unto all men to justification of life" (ver. 18).

<sup>1</sup> οἱ πολλοί.

<sup>2</sup> πάντες.

<sup>3</sup> Bentley, *Works* (ed. Dyce), iii. p. 244. The passage will be found in Lightfoot, *ut supra*, p. 108, or, more fully, in Trench, *ut supra*, p. 135 f.

## II

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LIFE, life not in ourselves, but in Christ, that is the promise of the Gospel; and short of "the life which is *life* indeed" (1 Tim. vi. 19), we cannot rest satisfied. Death to sin, forgiveness however absolute and complete, are at best but starting-points. What a man longs after is restored communion with God, that knowledge of God which, as our Lord Himself teaches, is of the very essence of the life eternal (John xvii. 3). Atonement, if it is to be truly deserving of the name, must issue in at-one-ment. And it is perhaps because this old English word has lost its original meaning, as well as for consistency of rendering, that the Revisers have removed it from the only place in which it occurs in our English Bibles, and that Rom. v. 11

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now reads : " But we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation." Reconciliation, indeed, the reconciliation of God to man, and man to God, is, as we learn elsewhere, the great message entrusted to Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor. v. 18-20), and the man who accepts it is more than pardoned ; there is " a new creation " (2 Cor. v. 17 margin).<sup>1</sup>

### I. LIFE IN CHRIST.

How beautifully, too, this our new state is brought before us in the revised rendering of Eph. ii. 13, " But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ." Already in ch. i. 7 St. Paul has spoken of the blood of Christ as the *causa medians* of our redemption—" in whom we have our redemption through His blood." Now he brings that blood

<sup>1</sup> A different side of Christ's work appears in Heb. ii. 17, where another Greek word (*ἱλάσκεσθαι*) is now rightly rendered " to make propitiation " not " reconciliation."

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before us (and it must be kept in view that in Scripture blood is always conceived of as living, and that therefore by the blood of Christ we must understand not His death, but His life, won through death, in heaven)<sup>1</sup> as the abiding condition or power “in” which we draw near.

The truth is so important that it may be well to illustrate it a little further. When, for example, with our ordinary version we are assured that “the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. vi. 23), we do not necessarily think of more than that Christ has worked a work on our behalf, which entitles us to share in eternal life. But when we find that the real rendering of the word is, “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord,” then we realize that this life, so far from being an endowment apart from Christ, can only be enjoyed in living union with Him, and necessarily brings with it all the accompaniments which such a union

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. Milligan, *The Resurrection of Our Lord*, London, 1884, p. 290 ff.

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involves. The believer is "persuaded in ('by,' Authorized Version) the Lord Jesus" (Rom. xiv. 14); he has "his glorying in ('through,' Authorized Version) Christ Jesus" (Rom. xv. 17); in everything he is "enriched in ('by,' Authorized Version) Him" (1 Cor. i. 5).

The duty of Christian forgiveness again is made by St. Paul to rest upon the fact that "God also in Christ forgave you" (Eph. iv. 32), instead of "for Christ's sake," a familiar phrase that now wholly disappears from the Authorized Version. And the same Apostle in one of the most personal of his Epistles can make it his proud claim, "I can do all things in Him ('through Christ,' Authorized Version) that strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13), even as he conveys a like assurance to his converts, "my God shall fulfil ('supply,' Authorized Version) every need of yours according to His riches in glory in ('by,' Authorized Version) Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 19).

Still other passages where the same preposition has now got its proper force, which

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have a more or less doctrinal significance, are Rom. v. 21, where the contrast between "sin in death" and "grace unto eternal life" is very instructive; Col. i. 16, 17, where the original creation of all things "in" Christ, as their initial cause, is shown to precede their coming into existence "through" Him, the mediatorial Lord, and their final return "unto" Him as their end and goal; and 1 Tim. iii. 16, where "in glory" marks Christ's state before and at Ascension, as well as after.

There are two Greek prepositions, both of which are ordinarily translated "from,"<sup>1</sup> but to the second of which the stronger meaning "out of" can also be assigned, as the Revisers have recognized in at least two important passages, though unfortunately they have confined the emendation to the margin. In John xii. 32 our Lord's claim is not, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me," words which would naturally confine His saving and attractive power to His death; but,

<sup>1</sup> ἀπό, ἐκ.



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“ And I, if I be lifted up out of the earth,” in which the thought of His resurrection is also included. It is the living Lord, Who has reached His own glory through suffering and death, Who is to exercise a universal sway, in strict conformity with the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews: “ But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, *even* Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every *man* ” (Heb. ii. 9). And similarly in the same Epistle the real tenor of our Lord’s prayers in the Garden is represented as being, not that He should be delivered “ from ” death, but “ out of ” death, brought safely, that is, through death into a new life: “ Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him out of death, and having been heard for His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered ” (Heb. v. 7, 8).

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To return, however, to the great truth of the life of the believer in Christ, we may still cite one or two fresh illustrations which it receives in the Revised Version. A familiar one occurs in our Lord's analogy of the Vine and the branches, for, as we now read, it is "apart from," and not merely "without" Him, the central Vine, that the branches "can do nothing" (John xv. 5). Or, again, in St. Paul's favourite figure of the Body and the members, how much is gained by the substitution of "made full" for "complete" in Col. ii. 10. "In Him," that is in Christ, so the Apostle has just been declaring, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and," he continues, "in Him ye are made full." It is actually in Christ's own fulness, the fulness just spoken of, that His people are entitled to share. And, once more, it is coming unto Him, "a living stone," that they also, "as living stones," are built up a spiritual house (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5)—the substitution of "lively" for "living" in the Authorized Version quite obscuring the parallelism.

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## 2. SANCTIFICATION.

The mention of building up, of a progressive growth in holiness, leads us to ask next, What has the Revised Version to teach us regarding the great doctrine of sanctification ?

One thing certainly, constantly lost sight of, is made clear, namely, that sanctification is not so much a consequence of salvation as an integral part of it. It is "in sanctification" rather than "unto holiness" that "God called us" (1 Thess. iv. 7), or, more fully, we are chosen "from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. iii. 13). "In" the will of God, that is, which Christ has perfectly fulfilled, Christians are included, and therefore sanctified (see Heb. x. 10, margin).

But this is far from saying that sanctification on our part can be realized all at once. The Christian believer, though ideally complete in Christ from the moment of

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his living union with Him, still knows from practical experience that it is only slowly and gradually that he can hope to apprehend the full privileges and duties of his new condition. And hence it is that the early converts of the Christian Church can be described not as "saved," but as "being saved" (Acts ii. 47),<sup>1</sup> or that, writing to the Corinthians, St. Paul can speak of the word of the Cross as the power of God "unto us which are being saved" (I Cor. i. 18).<sup>2</sup> The use of the perfect tense in the revised translation of Eph. ii. 5, "By grace have ye been saved," and the description of the new man as "being renewed" in Col. iii. 10, point in the same direction. While the ever-advancing goal towards which the believer is to press comes out clearly in St. Paul's prayer for his converts "that ye

<sup>1</sup> τοὺς σωζομένους.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. ii. 15 and the interesting gloss in Rom. xiii. 11, "Now is salvation nearer to us than when we *first* believed (ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν)," where the Revisers have inserted the word *first* to emphasize the contrast between full and final salvation, and the definite moment in the past when belief first manifested itself.

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may be filled unto ('with,' Authorized Version) all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 19), and in the words of the following chapter, "till we all attain unto the unity ('come in the unity,' Authorized Version) of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown ('perfect,' Authorized Version) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (ch. iv. 13).

The word rendered "fullgrown" in this last verse is in itself very significant. Literally it means that which has reached the goal, the end, of its existence. No single word in English altogether expresses this. "Fullgrown" is perhaps as literal a translation as possible, and is certainly better than the Authorized "perfect," which is apt to convey an erroneous impression. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the Revisers have not adopted it in 1 Cor. xiv. 20, Phil. iii. 15, Col. i. 28, iv. 12, and James iii. 2, as well as here, and in 1 Cor. ii. 6 (margin) and Heb. v. 14.

But however we describe the new life

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to which believers attain in Christ, the main point to be kept in view is that it is a "new" life, and not merely a reviving or deepening of the old: "the old things are passed away; behold they ('all things,' Authorized Version) are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). And the reason of this is that its standard is derived from the heavenly and Divine Jesus, so that "if we have become united with *Him* by the likeness of His death, we shall be also *by the likeness* of His resurrection" (Rom. vi. 5). Hence it is that believers receive the right to become "children," and not merely "sons" of God (John i. 12),<sup>1</sup> and that we catch the full meaning of such a passage as, "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18). Believers, as they steadfastly contemplate their Lord, gradually

<sup>1</sup> Τέκνα points to community of nature as distinguished from υἱοί, which might denote merely dignity of heirship. Cf. Phil. ii. 15; 1 John iii. 1, 2.



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grow more and more like to Him : they are not merely "followers," but "imitators" of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 1 ; Eph. v. 1 ; 1 Thess. i. 6), and, in obedience to the working of an irresistible law, "become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4).

Is it not a similar victory of "the Spirit" in believers which underlies the amended translation of Gal. v. 17 ? As we read the verse in the Authorized Version, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh : and these are contrary the one to the other : so that ye cannot do the things that ye would," St. Paul would seem to be adding only another to the many passages in which he reminds us that, notwithstanding our best wishes and intentions, sin is ever present with us. But read the last words, as in the Revised Version, "that ye may not do the things that ye would," and we are introduced to the comforting thought of a constraining power within us which prevents us from doing what we might otherwise incline to. The victory now rests with the Spirit, and not

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with the flesh. Or, as St. Paul states the same truth elsewhere from another point of view : “ Him who knew no sin He (*i.e.* God) made *to be* sin on our behalf ; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him ” (2 Cor. v. 21), where “ become,” not “ be made,” as in the Authorized Version, lays stress on the gradual but inevitable transformation of those who are vitally united to God in Christ.

Very striking, too, as bringing out the natural evolution of the Christian graces, is the amended version of 2 Pet. i. 5-7 : “ In your faith supply virtue ; and in *your* virtue knowledge ; and in *your* knowledge temperance . . . ” and so on through the familiar list, where the use of “ in ” in place of “ to ” implies not merely a catalogue of the graces, but their necessary dependence upon one another. The last clause, “ and in *your* love of the brethren love,” strange and tautological though at first it sounds, has been claimed as teaching no less a truth than that “ love, the feeling of man for man as man, finds, and can only find, its

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true foundation in the feeling of Christian for Christian, realised in and through the Incarnation of the Word.”<sup>1</sup>

### 3. THE SACRAMENTS.

The doctrine of the Sacraments may next engage our attention, and here again the variations in the renderings of familiar texts, though they may not appear at first of great importance, involve far-reaching truths. Thus Baptism is no longer represented as “in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. xxviii. 19), as if there were a kind of sacred charm in the mere words, but it is baptism “into the name . . .,” as the expression, that is, according to the common Scriptural use of the word, of the whole character of the Triune God, the sum of the whole Christian revelation. The knowledge of God as Father, the spiritual birth-right of Sonship, the power and advocacy of the Holy Spirit—all these privileges

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Westcott, *Expository Times*, iii. p. 396.

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belong to those who in divinely-appointed rite are incorporated into the Divine Name.<sup>1</sup> It is only right, however, to notice that the old translation “in the name” is strongly upheld by many modern scholars, who are able to appeal to the frequency with which the Greek preposition for “into”<sup>2</sup> is used for the Greek preposition for “in”<sup>3</sup> in late Greek.

In the case of the Lord's Supper, the well-known description in 1 Cor. xi. supplies us with an alteration which at once arrests our attention. In ver. 27 the Revisers, following the best-supported Greek text, substitute “or” for “and”—“Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.” It is hardly necessary to say that no support is thereby given to the Romish

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Acts viii. 16, xix. 5. The translators of the Authorized Version have given the preposition (εἰς) its full force in Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. x. 2, xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> εἰς.

<sup>3</sup> ἐν.

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practice of administering the sacrament to the laity only in one kind. Any such inference lies wholly beyond the scope of the words, and, as a matter of fact, is disproved by various other statements in this very chapter. But without pressing the new reading unduly, we may at least notice how it emphasizes the truth we are otherwise prepared for, that the two parts of the rite have distinct meanings. The Bread—that is, the Body of Christ—recalls more particularly His Incarnation, apart from His sufferings; for it is noteworthy that our Lord says nothing over the Bread to connect it directly with the thought of an offering for sin;<sup>1</sup> whereas the Cup—that is, His Blood—is definitely associated with His atoning work, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood: this do, as often as

<sup>1</sup> In 1 Cor. xi. 24 the word for “broken” (κλώμενον) disappears according to the best reading. Similarly in Luke xxii. 19 the words “which is given for you” are, as we learn from the marginal note, of doubtful authority. They may have formed, with the corresponding words in ver. 20, part of an early tradition, which was afterwards incorporated in the Evangelic text.

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ye drink *it*, in remembrance of Me," or, as the same truth appears still more clearly in the account in the First Gospel, "And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28). "We are not first purified from our sins and then incorporated into Christ. When we have been brought, just as we are, into the communion of His Body, then we are in a position to receive the cleansing action of His once outpoured Blood." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mason, *The Faith of the Gospel*, London, 1888, p. 305.



### III

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FREE WILL

### I. THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WHEN we pass to passages in the Revised Version bearing on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we cannot but again join in the widely-expressed regret that the Revisers did not see their way to follow the example of their American colleagues and adopt the uniform rendering of "Spirit" for the Greek word by which the Third Person of the Trinity is described, instead of retaining in numerous passages the archaic word "Ghost."<sup>1</sup> For not only is the word now meaningless, except in the sense of disembodied spirit, but its use obscures the vital relation between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. That yielding to the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 81.

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demands of the context, the Revisers read Spirit in certain passages—such as Luke ii. 25–27, “the Holy Spirit was upon him . . . it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit . . . he came in the Spirit,” or iv. 1, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit . . . was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil,” or 1 Cor. xii. 3, 4, “and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord”—only makes us wish the more that it had been consistently maintained.

Similarly when we pass to the description of the Spirit's work in our Lord's great Farewell Discourse. Here again (John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7), contrary to expectation, the translation “Comforter” has retained its place in the text; but the margin at least supplies us with the more exact rendering “Advocate.” For the Greek word <sup>1</sup> is passive, not active, in force,

<sup>1</sup> παράκλητος.

## Value of the Revised Version

and denotes literally one who is summoned to the side of an accused man to aid him in his defence in a court of justice, rather than one who simply consoles, or even strengthens according to the original force of "comforter." By the observance of this, not only is the full range of the Spirit's advocacy brought home to us, but we are also reminded of the close connexion between His work and the work of our Lord. It is He "who Himself is our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1), who promises that He will "pray the Father, and He shall give you another Advocate, that He may be with you for ever, *even* the Spirit of truth" (John xiv. 16).

The personality of the Spirit gains, too, new emphasis from the use of masculine pronouns in Rom. viii. 16 and 26, "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God . . . the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered": while the wide range of His influence is brought

# The Holy Spirit and Free Will

out by the omission of "unto him" from the close of John iii. 34, "For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God : for He giveth not the Spirit by measure"; and His continual ministry is enforced by the use of the present tense in I Thess. iv. 8, "God who giveth His Holy Spirit unto you."

As an example of a change so slight as liable to pass unmarked, and yet full of significance, we may point to the omission of "of" before "the Spirit" in John iii. 5, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," whereby "water" and "the Spirit" are shown to be, not two independent mediating agencies, but essentially connected.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. ELECTION AND FREE WILL.

If a bias against Rome has been unnecessarily urged against the Authorized

<sup>1</sup> Ellicott, *Considerations on the Revision of the English Testament*, London, 1870, p. 75, note 1.

## Value of the Revised Version

rendering of 1 Cor. xi. 27 (p. 121 f.), there seems equally little ground for asserting an undue bias in favour of Calvinistic doctrine in certain other passages, for in most of the renderings so cited the Translators of 1611 appear simply to have followed older authorities.<sup>1</sup> But, in any case, the Revisers have been careful to remove all ground of complaint.

Thus in Matt. xx. 23, "but to sit on my right hand, and on *my* left hand, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given* to them for whom it is prepared of my father," the clause "*it shall be given*" (which, as the italics show, does not belong to the original, but has found its way into the text through the Genevan version to bring out the sense) has now been softened down into "*it is for them* for whom it hath been prepared of my Father"; in the margins of Rom. iii. 25 and v. 12, the suggested alternative readings "foreordained" and "in

<sup>1</sup> Reference may be made to an article by Archdeacon Farrar on "Fidelity and Bias in Versions of the Bible" in the *Expositor*, 2nd Ser., iii. p. 280 ff.

## The Holy Spirit and Free Will

whom " disappear ; in the very difficult Heb. vi. 6, the words " if they shall fall away " are now rendered " and *then* fell away " in accordance with the tense of the Greek verb,<sup>1</sup> while the marginal " the while," instead of " seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh," makes it clear that it is only so long as men go on so crucifying the Son of God that renewal is impossible.

Or, to take one more example, it has been thought that the translation of the famous verse, Heb. x. 38, has been modified in the interests of the doctrine of the final perseverance of saints. Tindale translated it : " But the just shall live by faith. And if he withdraw himself, my soul shall have no pleasure in him "—showing that the person whose possible withdrawing is thought of is " the just " of the first clause. But the Genevan translators substituted " any " for " he," drawing a distinction between the two, and in this they were followed by the Authorized, " but if any man draw

<sup>1</sup> καὶ παραπεσόντας.



## Value of the Revised Version

back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”<sup>1</sup> The older and more correct rendering now reappears in the Revised :

“But my righteous one shall live by faith :

And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him.”

The freedom, indeed, of man's will and the need of a definite exercise of it in the realization of the offered blessings both obtain fresh prominence in the Revised Version. Thus in Matt. xviii. 3, the opening verb, though passive in form,<sup>2</sup> is properly rendered actively, and the popular error of men being mere passive instruments in the hands of God thereby exploded : “Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” And, so again, Peter's words in his sermon at Jerusalem gain a new and unexpected force when we read, “Repent ye therefore, and turn

<sup>1</sup> The italics *any man*, which now appear in our Bibles, were first introduced in the 1638 edition of the Authorized Version.

<sup>2</sup> στραφήτε.

## The Holy Spirit and Free Will

again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (Acts iii. 19).<sup>1</sup> Instead of the waiting to "be converted . . . when the times of refreshing shall come," in seasons, that is, of revival, we learn that the actual coming of these seasons is dependent on human effort, and the fulfilment by men of the necessary conditions by deliberately turning to God and obeying His will. It was a lesson that Peter himself had learned from the Lord : for the charge to him was not, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," but, "do thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 32).

In St. John's Gospel, again, its proper force is given to the Greek verb for "will,"<sup>2</sup> which, as rendered in the Authorized Version, seems often no more than the mark of the future. "Wouldest thou"—that is, hast thou the will, the desire to—"be made whole?" is the full force of Jesus' question

<sup>1</sup> ἐπιστρέψατε . . . ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσι καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως.

<sup>2</sup> θέλω.

## Value of the Revised Version

to the impotent man at Bethesda.<sup>1</sup> To the Twelve at Capernaum He says, "Would ye also go away?"<sup>2</sup> And, more pointedly still, "If any man will do his will" becomes, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak from myself":<sup>3</sup> "the force of the argument lies in the moral harmony of the man's purpose with the divine law so far as this law is known or felt."<sup>4</sup>

In the same connexion the force of the reflexive pronouns in John v. 42, "But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in yourselves"; *ib.* vi. 53, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves"; and *ib.* xvii. 19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth," ought not to be missed, as bringing out that the appropriation of the life of Christ on the part of believers, "so far from extinguishing their individuality,

<sup>1</sup> John v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* vi. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* vii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Westcott *ad loc.*

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responsibility, and freedom, . . . rather brings these prominently forward as characteristics especially distinguishing them.”<sup>1</sup>

Regarded indeed together, all believers form a single great abstract unity, which God has given to Christ: “whatsoever Thou hast given Him”—so our Lord Himself describes the company of the faithful in His great Intercessory Prayer. And it is only when the thought passes to the individuals composing that company, on whom in His turn the Son bestows His gift, that the neuter-singular gives place to the masculine-plural—“to them he should give eternal life.”<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, too, it is that in Christ we have not only “redemption” as a general

<sup>1</sup> W. Milligan, *The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord*, London, 1892, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> John xvii. 2. With this may be compared the Pauline, “For ye are all one *man* in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 28), “not ‘one’ only in the abstract by the acknowledgment of a real fellowship, . . . but *one man*: . . . one by the presence of a vital energy guided by one law, one will, to one end” (Westcott, *The Victory of the Cross*, London, 1888, p. 41).

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gift, according to the Authorized rendering, but "our redemption," so the Revisers translate, to bring out the force of the definite article in the original, the redemption which meets our individual needs (Eph. i. 7). And again, when the Lord comes, "who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts," the promise is, "then shall each man have his praise from God"—a much more personal award than, "then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. iv. 5).

## IV

### THE LAST THINGS

#### I. THE PAROUSIA.

THE word "manifest" in the last-mentioned passage introduces us to yet another line of doctrinal truth, which the Revised Version helps to make clear. Christ's coming or "presence," as the margin of the Revised Version more correctly renders the Greek word,<sup>1</sup> is represented by all the Apostolic writers as far more than an appearing. It is a manifestation, a showing forth of Himself openly to the world as He actually

<sup>1</sup> *παρουσία*: see Matt. xxiv. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 19, etc. It is perhaps unfortunate that in these passages the Revisers did not boldly anglicize the Greek word and translate by "Parousia." On the full force of the term in the light of recent discovery see G. Milligan, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians*, London, 1908, pp. 145 ff.



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is—Col. iii. 4, “When Christ, *who is* our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory”; 1 Pet. v. 4, “And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away”; 1 John ii. 28, “And now, *my* little children, abide in Him; that, if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” And the result of such manifestation is that men too shall be made manifest—2 Cor. v. 10, “For we must all be made manifest before the judgement-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.” All outward disguises by which men have deceived themselves or the world will be stripped from them. They will be shown in their inmost being, and, consequently on this showing, the appropriate reward or punishment will immediately and necessarily follow. Those whose life has been “hid with Christ in God” shall then “also with Him be manifested in

## The Last Things

glory" (Col. iii. 4) : and then too "shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus . . . shall bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming" (2 Thess. ii. 8).<sup>1</sup> How familiar indeed the thought of this great Day was to the minds of the early Christians, and how vividly its imagery was conceived, is proved by the constant use of the definite article with reference to its accompaniments. It is with "the clouds" that Christ comes (Rev. i. 7), and by "the falling away" and the revealing of "the man of sin," that that coming will be preceded (2 Thess. ii. 3; cf. 2 John 7, "This is the deceiver and the antichrist"). Not merely into "outer darkness" but into "the outer darkness" shall the unprofitable be cast, where shall be "the

<sup>1</sup> We may here call attention to the emphasis laid on the personality of the Devil in the Revised renderings of Matt. v. 37 (cf. ver. 39), vi. 13; John xvii. 15; Eph. vi. 16; 2 Thess. iii. 3; 1 John v. 18, 19. The masculine pronoun in Mark xiii. 14, "But when ye see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not (*τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ*)," should also be noted.

## Value of the Revised Version

weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. viii. 12 ; cf. *ib.* xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13, xxiv. 51, xxv. 30, Luke xiii. 28). It is again from "the wrath," and not from "wrath" generally, that Christ's people are saved (Rom. v. 9), and "in the white robes" that those who have come out of "the great tribulation" are arrayed (Rev. vii. 13, 14). Nor is it only for "a city which hath foundations" that they are encouraged to look, but for "the city which hath the foundations" (Heb. xi. 10)—those glorious foundations which are so fully described in the Revelation of St. John (xxi. 14, 19, 20).

### 2. THE HEREAFTER.

The bearing of the Revised Version upon the Future State opens up too many questions to be discussed in the closing sentences of this book. But how significant its bearing is, and how widely it may come to modify the popular views of the Hereafter must be obvious to all who keep in

## The Last Things

view the following facts: (1) The words "damnation," "damned," "damnable," have wholly disappeared—"condemnation," "judgement," and their cognates, taking their place; (2) "Hell," when referring generally to the unseen world beyond the grave, becomes "Hades"; when punishment, as a part of that state, is implied, it is retained, but even then "Gehenna," the literal meaning of the word in the original, always finds a place in the margin; and (3) "everlasting," as applied alike to future bliss or future woe, is replaced by "eternal," a word which does not so much express endless duration in time, as that which transcends time, very much what we otherwise designate "spiritual," or, if the element of time does enter into it, it rather suggests a fixed period, "age-long," or "through the ages."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See these changes discussed from his own point of view, but with great moderation of language in a paper by Dr. Samuel Cox in *The Expositor*, 1st ser. iii. pp. 434 ff. Some remarks by Professor A. Roberts on the same subject will be found in *The Expository Times*, iii. pp. 549 ff.

## Value of the Revised Version

There are many other points on which, if space had permitted, I would gladly have dealt, but enough I trust has been said to show how true it is that “every scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable for teaching” (2 Tim. iii. 16, R.V.), and at least to give a glimpse of the rich field of inquiry that lies before the student in the careful comparison of our Authorized and Revised Versions.

## APPENDIX

FOR the study of the Revised Version a Parallel Bible or New Testament is indispensable, and for those who know Greek the *Parallel New Testament, Greek and English* (with generous margins), published by the Oxford University Press, is specially recommended. The Cambridge University Press have issued a useful, though somewhat bulky, volume containing the Parallel New Testament interleaved with writing-paper for the use of students. All editions that do not contain the Revisers' *marginal* renderings should be carefully avoided.

Those who desire to trace more fully the history of the different English Versions should consult such well-known works on the English Bible as those by Professor Eadie (2 vols., London, 1876), by Dr. W. F. Moulton (revised edit., London, 1911), and



## Appendix

by Bishop Westcott (new edit., London, 1905). A briefer sketch will be found in the present writer's Guild text-book (London, A. & C. Black), which contains a selected Bibliography of other books dealing with the subject.

The case for the need of the Revision of the Authorized Version is admirably stated by Archbishop Trench in his *Essay On the Authorized Version of the New Testament* (2nd edit., London, 1859), by Bishop Ellicott in his *Considerations on the Revision of the English Version of the New Testament* (London, 1870), and by Bishop Lightfoot, with more direct reference to the original Greek, in his most suggestive study *On a Fresh Revision of the English New Testament* (3rd edit., London, 1891). Bishop Ellicott, who acted as Chairman of the New Testament Revision Committee, has also given a most interesting account of the Committee's proceedings in a small volume entitled *Addresses on the Revised Version of Holy Scripture* (London, S.P.C.K., 1901).

## Appendix

The way in which the new renderings can be made profitable for preaching is well brought out in Dean Vaughan's volume of sermons, *Authorized or Revised?* (London, 1882). But, above all, for a proper apprehension of the importance of the Revisers' work, no one should neglect Bishop Westcott's *Some Lessons of the Revised Version of the New Testament* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1897), in which the significance of the various changes introduced is traced with all the writer's marvellous acquaintance with the original Greek text, and deep spiritual insight.



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